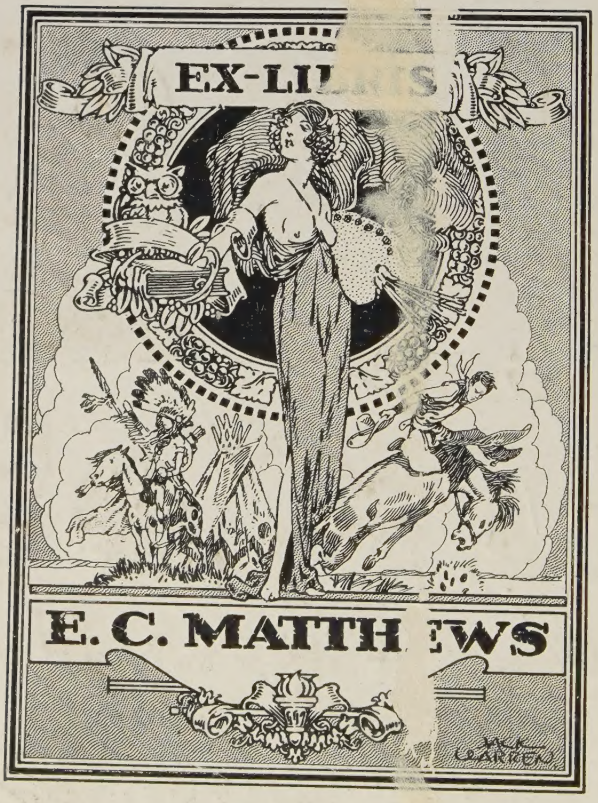
Poems of Progress

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX


EX-LI S
E. C. MATTH EWS
MCK CLARKE

-2-558

UNITY LIBRARY & ARCHIVES
Poems of progress ; and New Tho
CLOSED PS 3312 .P7 1909
0 0051 0020286 6

CLOSED COLLECTION

8X5 1/2 - 177 pp

A!

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/poemsofprogressn0000ella

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

CLOSED COLLECTION

POEMS OF PROGRESS

AND

NEW THOUGHT PASTELS

BY

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

CHICAGO:
W. B. CONKEY COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

UNITY SCHOOL LIBRARY
Unity Village
Lee's Summit, Missouri 6406

Copyright, 1909,
by
Ella Wheeler Wilcox

PREFACE

LOVE'S LANGUAGE

When silence flees before the voice of Love,
Of what expression does that god approve?
Is dulcet song or flowing verse his choice,
Or stately prose, made regal by his voice?
Speaks Love in couplets, or in epics grand?
And is love humble, or does he command?

There is no language that Love does not speak:
To-day commanding and to-morrow meek,
One hour laconic and the next verbose,
With hope triumphant and with doubt morose,
His varying moods all forms of speech employ.
To give expression to his painful joy,
To voice the phases of his joyful pain,
He rings the changes on the poet's strain.
Yet not in epic, epigram or verse
Can Love the passion of his heart rehearse.
All speech, all language, is inadequate,
There are no words with Love commensurate.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Preface	
Five Kisses	7
The Land Between	10
Aristarchus	11
Love's Mirage	13
The Need of the World	14
The Gulf Stream	16
Forbidden Speech	17
The Ghost	18
Reincarnation	20
A Man's Last Love	22
A Holiday	23
Love's Ways	25
Words and Thoughts	26
Remembered	27
Helen of Troy	28
Lais When Young	29
Lais When Old	30
At Bay	31
Holiday Songs	32
How Will It Be	34
Astrolabius	35
Competition	37
Sleep's Treachery	39
Art Versus Cupid	40
The Revolt of Vashti	46
The Choosing of Esther	49

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Honeymoon Scene	53
The Cost	58
Retrospection	60
The House of Life	61
The Voice	63
God's Answer	65
The Edict of the Sex	66
The World Child	68
The Goal	69
On Seeing the House of Julia at Herculaneum	70
A Prayer	71
What is Right Living	72
Justice	73
Time's Gaze	74
The Two Ages	75
Love, Time and Will	77
The Worker and the Work	78
Art Thou Alive	80
Today	81
The Ladder	82
Who Is a Christian	83
The Goal	84
The Spur	86
Awakened	87
Shadows	89
The New Commandment	90
Summer Dreams	91
The Breaking of Chains	92
December	94
The Way	95
The Leader To Be	96
The Greater Love	98
Thank God for Life	99
The Law	100

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Time Enough	102
New Year's Day	103
Life Is a Privilege	104
In an Old Art Gallery	106
True Brotherhood	106
The Decadent	107
Lord, Speak Again	108
My Heaven	110
Life	111
God's Kin	112
Conquest	113
The Statue	114
Sirius	115
At Fontainebleau	117
The Masquerade	118
Sympathy	119
Intermediary	120
Life's Car	121
Opportunity	122
The Age of Motored Things	123
New Year	124
Disarmament	125
Existence	126
The Heights	127
The Hymn of the Republic	129
The Radiant Christ	131
The Call	133
A Little Song	134
The Birth of Jealousy	135
Summer's Farewell	137

POEMS OF PROGRESS

FIVE KISSES

I

THE MOTHER'S KISS

Love breathed a secret to her listening heart,
And said, "Be silent." Though she guarded it,
And dwelt as one within a world apart,
Yet sun and star seemed by that secret lit;
And where she passed, each whispering wind ablow,
And every little blossom in the sod,
Called joyously to her, "We know, we know,
For are we not the intimates of God?"
Life grew so radiant and so opulent,
That when her fragile body and her brain
By mortal throes of agony were rent,
She felt a curious rapture in her pain.
Then after anguish came the supreme bliss—
They brought the little baby for her kiss.

II

THE BETROTHAL

There was a quiet pause between the dances;
Without, somewhere, a tinkling fountain played.
The dusky path was lit by ardent glances
As forth they fared, a lover and a maid.

He chose a nook from curious eyes well hidden,
All redolent with sweet midsummer charm,
And by the great primeval instinct bidden,
He drew her in the shelter of his arm.
The words, that long deep in his heart had trembled,
Found sudden utterance, and made love's demand.
By feigned denials, she at first dissembled,
Refused her lips and half withdrew her hand.
Then murmured "Yes," and yielded, woman fashion,
Her virgin mouth to Young Love's kiss of passion.

III

THE BRIDAL KISS

As fleecy clouds trail back across the skies
Showing the sweet young moon in azure space,
The lifted veil revealed her shining face—
A sudden wonder, to his eager eyes.
In that familiar beauty lurked surprise,
For now the wife stood in the maiden's place,
With conscious dignity, and woman's grace,
And love's large pride, grown trebly fair and wise.
The world receded, leaving them alone.
The universe was theirs, from sphere to sphere;
And life assumed new meaning and new worth.
Love held no privilege they did not own,
And when they kissed each other without fear,
They understood why God had made the earth.

IV

DOMESTIC BLISS

Sequestered in their calm domestic bower,
They sat together—he in manhood's prime

And she a matron in her fullest flower.
The mantel clock gave forth a warning chime.
She put her work aside; his bright cigar
Grew pale and crumbled in an ashen heap.
The lights went out, save one remaining star
That watched beside the children in their sleep.
She hummed a little song, and nestled near
As, side by side, they went to their repose.
His arm about her waist, he whispered "Dear!"
And pressed his lips upon her mouth's full rose.
The sacred sweetness of their wedded life
Breathed in that kiss of husband and of wife.

V

OLD AGE

The young see heaven; but to the old who wait
The final call, the hills of youth arise
More beautiful than shores of Paradise.
Beside a glowing and voracious grate
A dozing couple dream of Yesterday;
The islands of a vanquished Past appear,
Bringing forgotten names and faces near;
While lost in mist, the Present fades away.
The fragment winds of tender memories blow
Across the gardens of the Used-to-be;
They smile into each other's eyes, and see
The bride and bridegroom of the long ago.
And tremulous lips, pressed close to faded cheek,
Love's silent tale of deathless passion speak.

THE LAND BETWEEN

Between the little Here and larger Yonder,
  There is a realm (or so one day I read)
Where faithful spirits love-enchained may wander,
  Till some remembering soul from earth has fled.
Then, reunited, they go forth afar,
From sphere to sphere, where wondrous angels are.

Not many spirits in that realm are waiting;
  Not many pause upon its shores to rest;
For only love, intense and unabating,
  Can hold them from the longer, higher quest.
And after grief has wept itself to sleep,
Few hearts on earth their vital memories keep.

Should I pass on, across the mystic border,
  Let thy love link me to that pallid land;
I would not seek the heavens of finer order
  Until thy barque had left this coarser strand.
How desolate such journeyings would be,
Though straight to Him, were they not shared by thee.

Wert thou first called (dear God, how could I bear it?)
  I should enchain thee with my love, I know.
Not great enough am I to free thy spirit
  From all these tender ties, and bid thee go.
Nor would a soul, unselfish as thine own,
Forget so soon, and speed to heaven alone.

On earth we find no joy in ways diverging;
How could we find it in the worlds unseen?
I know old memories from my bosom surging,
Would keep thee waiting in that Land Between,
Until together, side by side, we trod
A path of stars, in our great search for God.

ARISTARCHUS

(THE MOUNTAIN IN THE MOON)

It was long and long ago our love began;
It is something all unmeasured by Time's span.
In an era and a spot
By the modern world forgot,
We were lovers ere God named us maid and man.

Like the memory of music made by streams
All the beauty of that other love-life seems.
But I always thought it so,
And at last I know, I know—
We were lovers in the Land of Silver Dreams!

When the moon was at the full I found the place:
Out, and out, across the seas of shining space,
On a quest that could not fail,
I unfurled my Memory sail,
And cast anchor in the Bay of Love's First Grace!

At the foot of Aristarchus lies this bay.
(Oh, the wonder of that mountain far away!)
And the Land of Silver Dreams
All about it shines and gleams,
Where we loved, before God fashioned night or day.

We were souls in eery bodies, made of light;
We were winged, and we could speed from height to height;
And we built a nest called Hope
On the sheer moon mountain slope,
Where we sat and watched new worlds wheel into sight.

And we saw this little planet known as Earth,
When the mighty Mother Chaos gave it birth;
But in love's conceit we thought
All these worlds from space were brought,
For no greater aim, or purpose, than our mirth.

And we laughed in love's abandon, and we sang
Till the echoing peaks of Aristarchus rang,
As hot-hissing comets came,
And white suns burst into flame,
And a myriad of worlds from darkness sprang.

I can show you when the moon is at its best,
Aristarchus and the spot we made our nest.
Oh, I always wondered why,
When the moon was in the sky,
I was stirred with such strange longings and unrest.

And I knew the subtle beauty and the force
Of our love was never bounded by earth's course!
So with Memory's sail unfurled,
I went cruising past this world
And I followed, till I traced it to its source.

LOVE'S MIRAGE

Midway upon the route, he paused athirst;
And suddenly across the wastes of heat,
He saw cool waters gleaming, and a sweet
Green oasis upon his vision burst.
A tender dream, long in his bosom nursed,
Spread love's illusive verdure for his feet;
The barren sands changed into golden wheat;
The way grew glad that late had seemed accursed.

She shone, the woman wonder, on his soul;
The garden spot, for which men toil and wait;
The house of rest, that is each heart's demand;
But when, at last, he reached the gleaming goal,
He found, oh, cruel irony of fate,
But desert sun upon the desert sand.

THE NEED OF THE WORLD.

I know the need of the world,
Though it would not have me know.
It would hide its sorrow deep,
Where only God may go.
Yet its secret it can not keep;
It tells it awake, or asleep,
It tells it to all who will heed,
And he who runs may read.
The need of the world I know.

I know the need of the world,
When it boasts of its wealth the loudest,
When it flaunts it in all men's eyes,
When its mien is the gayest and proudest.
Oh! ever it lies—it lies,
For the sound of its laughter dies
In a sob and a smothered moan,
And it weeps when it sits alone.
The need of the world I know.

I know the need of the world.
When the earth shakes under the tread
Of men who march to the fight,
When rivers with blood are red
And there is no law but might,
And the wrong way seems the right;
When he who slaughters the most
Is all men's pride and boast,
The need of the world I know.

I know the need of the world.
When it babbles of gold and fame,
It is only to lead us astray
From the thing that it dare not name
For this is the sad world's way.
Oh! poor blind world grown gray
With the need of a thing so near,
With the want of a thing so dear.
The need of the world I know.

The need of the world is love.
Deep under the pride of power,
Down under its lust of greed,
For the joys that last but an hour,
There lies forever its need.
For love is the law and the creed
And love is the unnamed goal
Of life, from man to the mole.
Love is the need of the world.

THE GULF STREAM

Skilled mariner, and counted sane and wise,
That was a curious thing which chanced to me,
So good a sailor on so fair a sea.
With favoring winds and blue unshadowed skies,
Led by the faithful beacon of Love's eyes,
Past reef and shoal, my life-boat bounded free
And fearless of all changes that might be
Under calm waves, where many a sunk rock lies.

A golden dawn; yet suddenly my barque
Strained at the sails, as in a cyclone's blast;
And battled with an unseen current's force,
For we had entered when the night was dark
That old tempestuous Gulf Stream of the Past.
But for love's eyes, I had not kept the course.

FORBIDDEN SPEECH

The passion you forbade my lips to utter
  Will not be silenced. You must hear it in
The sullen thunders, when they roll and mutter,
  And when the tempest nears, with wail and din,
I know your calm forgetfulness is broken,
And to your heart you whisper,
  "He has spoken."

All nature understands and sympathizes
  With human passion. When the restless sea
Turns in its futile search for peace, and rises
  To plead and to pursue, it speaks for me.
And with each desperate billow's anguish fretting
Your heart must tell you,
  "He is not forgetting."

When unseen hands in lightning strokes are writing,
  Mysterious words, upon a cloudy scroll,
Know that my pent-up passion is indicting
  A cipher message for your listening soul.
And when the lawless winds rush by you shrieking,
Let your heart say,
  "Now his despair is speaking."

Love comes, nor goes, at beck or call of reason;
  Nor is Love silent, though it says no word.
By day or night, in any clime or season,
  A dominating passion must be heard.

So shall you hear, through Junes and through Decembers,
The voice of Nature saying,
"He remembers."

THE GHOST

Through the open gate of Dreamland
Came a ghost of long ago, long ago.
When I wakened, all unheeding
Was the phantom to my pleading,
For he would not turn and go.
But beside me all the day
In my work, and in my play,
Trod this ghost of long ago, long ago.

Not a vague and pallid phantom
Was this ghost that came to me, followed me;
Though he rose from regions haunted,
Though he came unbid, unwanted,
He was very fair to see.
Like the radiant sun in space
Was the halo round the face
Of that ghost that came to me, followed me.

And he wore no shroud or cerecloth,
As he wandered at my side, close beside.
He was clothed in royal splendor,
And his eyes were deep and tender,
While he walked in stately pride.

And he seemed like some great king,
Not afraid of anything,
  As he wandered at my side, close beside.

Then I turned to him, commanding
  That he go the way he came, whence he came;
But he answered me in sorrow,
"May the Past not seek to borrow
  From the Present, without blame,
Just one memory from its store,
Ere it goes to come no more,
  Back the pathway that it came, whence it came?"

Then, ashamed of my full coffers,
  I gave forth from Memory's hold (wondrous hold!)
All I owed of tax, and duty,
For remembered hours of beauty,
  Which I paid in thoughts of gold.
Yet my Present seemed to be,
Richer still for all the fee
  I gave forth from Memory's hold (wondrous hold!)

REINCARNATION

He slept as weary toilers do;
  She gazed up at the moon.
He stirred and said, "Wife, come to bed;"
  She answered, "Soon, full soon."
(*Oh, that strange mystery of the dead moon's face!*)

Her cheek was wan; her wistful mouth
  Was lifted like a cup.
The moonfull night dripped liquid light;
  She seemed to quaff it up.
(*Oh, that unburied corpse that lies in space!*)

Her life had held but drudgery;
  She spelled her Bible through.
Of book and lore she knew no more
  Than little children do.
(*Oh, the wierd wonder of that pallid sphere!*)

Her youth had been a leaden sky
  Starred by no holiday,
And she had wed for roof and bread;
  She gave her work in pay.
(*Oh, the moon memories, vague and sweet and dear!*)

She drank the night's insidious wine,
  And saw another scene—
A stately room, rare flowers in bloom,
  Herself in silken sheen.
(*Oh, vast the chambers of the moon and wide!*)

A step drew near, a curtain stirred;
  She shook with sweet alarms.
Oh, splendid face! oh, manly grace!
  Oh, strong outreaching arms!
(*Oh, silent moon, what secrets do you hide!*)

The burning lips of thirsting love
  Were parched with passion's drouth.
As the bee knows where honey grows,
  They sought her cheek, her mouth.
(*Oh, the dead moon holds many a dead delight!*)

The sleeper stirred and gruffly spoke:
  "Come, wife! Where have you been?"
She whispered low, "Dear God, I go—
  But 'tis the seventh sin."
(*Oh, the sad secrets of that orb of white!*)

A MAN'S LAST LOVE

Like the tenth wave that offers to the shore
  Accumulated opulence and force,
So does my heart, which thought it loved of yore,
  Convey increasing passion down the course
Of time to proffer thee.
  Oh, not the faint
  First ripple of the sea should be its pride,
But the great climax of its unrestraint,
  Which culminates in one commanding tide.

The lesser billows of each crude emotion
  Break on life's strand, recede and then unite
With love's large sea, and to some late devotion,
  Unrecognized, they bring their lost delight.
So all the vanished fancies of my past
Live yet in this one passion, grand and vast.

A HOLIDAY

The Wife

The house is like a garden,
  The children are the flowers;
The gardener should come, methinks,
  And walk among his bowers.
Oh, lock the door on worry,
  And shut your cares away!
Not time of year, but love and cheer,
  Will make a holiday.

The Husband

Impossible! You women do not know
The toil it takes to make a business grow.
I cannot join you until very late,
So hurry home, nor let the dinner wait.

The Wife

The feast will be like Hamlet,
  Without a Hamlet part.
The home is but a house, dear,
  Till you supply the heart.
The Christmas gift I long for,
  You need not toil to buy.
Oh, give me back one thing I lack—
  The love-light in your eye!

The Husband

Of course I love you, and the children too;
Be sensible, my dear; it is for you

I work so hard to make my business pay.
There now, run home; enjoy your holiday.

The Wife (*turning away*)

He does not mean to wound me,
  I know his heart is kind.
Alas, that men can love us,
  And be so blind, so blind!
A little time for pleasure,
  A little time for play,
A word to prove the life of love
  And frighten care away,
Though poor my lot in some small cot—
  That were a holiday.

The Husband (*musing*)

She has not meant to wound me or to vex.
Zounds! but 'tis difficult to please the sex.
I've housed and gowned her like a very queen,
Yet there she goes with discontented mien.
I gave her diamonds only yesterday.
Some women are like that, do what you may.

LOVE'S WAYS

Love gives us curious potions of delight,
  Of pain and ecstacy, and peace and care,
Love leads us upward, to the mountain height
  And, like an angel, stands beside us there.
Then thrusts us, demon-like, in some abyss
  Where, in the darkness of despair, we grope
Till, suddenly, love greets us with a kiss
  And guides us back to flowery fields of hope.

Love makes all wisdom seem but poorest folly,
  And yet the simplest mind, with love grows wise.
The gayest heart, he teaches melancholy;
  Yet glorifies the erstwhile brooding eyes.
Love lives on change, and yet at change love mocks,
For love's whole life, is one great paradox.

WORDS AND THOUGHTS

He said, as he sat in her theater box
Between the acts: "What beastly weather!
How like a parrot the lover talks,
And the lady is tame, and the villain stalks.
I hope they finally die together."

He thought: "You are fair as the dawn's first ray;
I know the angels keep guard above you.
And so I chatter of weather and play,
While all the time I am mad to say,
'I love you, love you, love you.'"

He said: "The season is almost run.
How glad we are when the farce is over,
For the toil of pleasure is more than its fun,
And what is it all when all is done,
But the stick of a rocket that has descended."

He thought: "O God, to be off somewhere,
Afar with you from this scene of fashion;
To know you were mine and to have you care,
And to lose myself in the crimson snare
Of your lips in a kiss of passion."

He said: "You are going abroad, no doubt,
The land of Liberty coldly scorning;
I, too, shall journey a bit about,
From Wall Street up by the L road out
To Harlem—and down each morning."

He thought: "It must follow on land or sea,
This pent-up, passionate, dumb devotion,
Till the cry of a rapture that may not be
Shall reach your heart from the heart of me,
And stir you with strange emotion."

REMEMBERED

His art was loving; Eres set his sign
Upon that youthful forehead, and he drew
The hearts of women, as the sun draws dew.
Love feeds love's thirst as wine feeds love of wine;
Nor is there any potion from the vine
Which makes men drunken like the subtle brew
Of kisses crushed by kisses; and he grew
Inebriated with that draught divine.

Yet in his sober moments, when the sun
Of radiant summer paled to lonely fall,
And passion's sea had grown an ebbing tide,
From out the many, Memory singled one
Full cup that seemed the sweetest of them all—
The warm red mouth that mocked him and denied.

HELEN OF TROY

ON THE ISLE OF CRANAE

The world an abject vassal to her charms,
And kings competing for a single smile,
Yet love she knew not, till upon this isle
She gave surrender to abducting arms.
Not Theseus, who plucked her lips' first kiss,
Not Menelaus, lawful mate and spouse,
Such answering passion in her heart could rouse,
Or wake such tumult in her soul as this.
Let come what will, let Greece and Asia meet,
Let heroes die and kingdoms run with gore;
Let devastation spread from shore to shore—
Resplendent Helen finds her bondage sweet.
The whole world fights her battles, while she lies
Sunned in the fervor of young Paris' eyes.

ON THE ISLE OF RHODES

The battles ended, ardent Paris dead,
Of faithful Menelaus long bereft,
Time is the only suitor who is left:
Helen survives, with youth and beauty fled.
By hate remembered, but by love forgot,
Dethroned and driven from her high estate,
Unhappy Helen feels the lash of Fate
And knows at last an unloved woman's lot.
The Grecian marvel, and the Trojan joy,

The world's fair wonder, from her palace flies.
The furies follow, and great Helen dies,
A death of horror, for the pride of Troy.

* * * * * * *

Yet Time, like Menelaus, all forgives.
Helen, immortal in her beauty, lives.

LAIS WHEN YOUNG

Lais when young, and all her charms in flower,
Lais, whose beauty was the fateful light
That led great ships to anchor in the night
And bring their priceless cargoes to her bower,
Lais yet found her cup of sweet turned sour.
Great Plato's pupil, from his lofty height,
Zenocrates, unmoved, had seen the white
Sweet wonder of her, and defied her power.

She snared the world in nets of subtle wiles:
The proud, the famed, all clamored at her gate;
Dictators plead, inside her portico;
Wisdom sought madness, in her favoring smiles;
Now was she made the laughing-stock of fate:
One loosed her clinging arms, and bade her go.

LAIS WHEN OLD

Lais, when old and all her beauty gone,
Lais, the erstwhile courted pleasure queen,
Walked homeless through Corinth. One mocked her mien—
One tossed her coins; she took them and passed on.
Down by the harbor sloped a terraced lawn,
Where fountains played; she paused to view the scene.
A marble palace stood in bowers of green.
'Twas here of old she reveled till the dawn.

Through yonder portico her lovers came—
Hero and statesman, athlete, merchant, sage;
They flung the whole world's treasures at her feet
To buy her favor and exalt her shame.

* * * * * * *

She spat upon her dole of coins in rage
And faded like a phantom down the street.

AT BAY

Wife

Reach out your arms, and hold me close and fast.
Tell me there are no memories of your past
That mar this love of ours, so great, so vast.

Husband

Some truths are cheapened when too oft averred.
Does not the deed speak louder than the word?
(Dear God, that old dream woke again and stirred.)

Wife

As you love me, you never loved before?
Though oft you say it, say it yet once more.
My heart is jealous of those days of yore.

Husband

Sweet wife, dear comrade, mother of my child,
My life is yours by memory undefiled.
(It stirs again, that passion brief and wild.)

Wife

You never knew a happier hour than this?
We two alone, our hearts surcharged with bliss,
Nor other kisses, sweet as my own kiss?

Husband

I was a thirsty field, long parched with drouth;
You were the warm rain, blowing from the south.
(But, ah, the crimson madness of *her* mouth!)

Wife

You would not, if you could, go down life's track
For just one little moment and bring back
Some vanished rapture that you miss or lack?

Husband

I am content. You are my life, my all.
(One burning hour, but one, could I recall;
God, how men lie when driven to the wall!)

HOLIDAY SONGS

I

Sailing away on a summer sea,
  Out of the bleak March weather;
Drifting away for a loaf and play,
  Just you and I together;
And it's good-bye worry and good-bye hurry
And never a care have we;
With the sea below and the sun above
And nothing to do but dream and love,
  Sailing away together.

Sailing away from the grim old town
  And tasks the town calls duty;
Sailing away from walls of gray
  To a land of bloom and beauty,
And it's good-bye to letters from our lessers and our betters,
To the cold world's smile or its frown.
We sail away on a sunny track
To find the summer and bring it back
  And love is our only duty.

II

Afloat on a sea of passion
Without a compass or chart,
But the glow of your eye shows the sun is high,
By the sextant of my heart.
I know we are nearing the tropics
By the languor that round us lies,
And the smile on your mouth says the course is south
And the port is Paradise.

We have left gray skies behind us,
We sail under skies of blue;
You are off with me on lovers' sea,
And I am away with you.
We have not a single sorrow,
And I have but one fear—
That my lips may miss one offered kiss
From the mouth that is smiling near.

There is no land of winter;
There is no world of care;
There is bloom and mirth all over the earth,
And love, love everywhere.
Our boat is the barque of Pleasure,
And whatever port we sight
The touch of your hand will make the land
The Harbor of Pure Delight.

HOW WILL IT BE?

How will it be when one of us alone
Goes on that strange, last journey of the soul,
That voyage on which no comradeship is known?
Will our dear sea sing in the old sweet tone,
Though one sits stricken where its billows roll?
Will space be dumb, or from the mystic pole
Will whisperings of love be backward blown.

When our united lives are wrenched apart,
And day no more means sweet companionship;
When fervent night, and lovely languorous dawn,
Are only memories to one sad heart,
And but in dreams fond kisses burn the lip,
Dear God, how can this same fair world move on?

ASTROLABIUS

(THE CHILD OF ABELARD AND HÉLOISE)

I

Wrenched from a passing comet in its flight,
By that great force of two mad hearts aflame,
A soul incarnate, back to earth you came,
To glow like star-dust for a little night.
Deep shadows hide you wholly from our sight;
The centuries leave nothing but your name,
Tinged with the luster of a splendid shame,
That blazed oblivion with rebellious light.

The mighty passion that became your cause,
Still burns its lengthening path across the years;
We feel its raptures, and we see its tears
And ponder on its retributive laws.
Time keeps that deathless story ever new;
Yet finds no answer, when we ask of you.

II

At Argenteuil, I saw the lonely cell
Where Heloise dreamed through her broken rest,
That baby lips pulled at her undried breast.
It needed but my woman's heart to tell
Of those long vigils and the tears that fell
When aching arms reached out in fruitless quest,
As after flight, wings brood an empty nest.
(So well I know that sorrow, ah, so well.)

Across the centuries there comes no sound
  Of that vast anguish; not one sigh or word
  Or echo of the mother loss has stirred,
The sea of silence, lasting and profound.
  Yet to each heart, that once has felt this grief,
  Sad Memory restores Time's missing leaf.

III

But what of you? Who took the mother's place
  When sweet expanding love its object sought?
  Was there a voice to tell her tragic lot,
And did you ever look upon her face?
Was yours a cloistered seeking after grace?
  Or in the flame of adolescent thought
  Were Abelard's departed passions caught
To burn again in you and leave their trace?

Conceived in nature's bold primordial way
  (As in their revolutions, suns create),
  You came to earth, a soul immaculate,
Baptized in fire, with some great part to play.
  What was that part, and wherefore hid from us,
  Immortal mystery, Astrolabius!

COMPLETION

When I shall meet God's generous dispensers
Of all the riches in the heavenly store,
Those lesser gods, who act as Recompensers
For loneliness and loss upon this shore,
Methinks abashed, and somewhat hesitating,
My soul its wish and longing will declare.
Lest they reply: "Here are no bounties waiting:
We gave on earth, your portion and your share."

Then shall I answer: "Yea, I do remember
The many blessings to my life allowed;
My June was always longer than December,
My sun was always stronger than my cloud,
My joy was ever deeper than my sorrow,
My gain was ever greater than my loss,
My yesterday seemed less than my tomorrow,
The crown looked always larger than the cross.

"I have known love, in all its radiant splendor,
It shone upon my pathway to the end.
I trod no road that did not bloom with tender
And fragrant blossoms, planted by some friend.
And those material things we call successes,
In modest measure, crowned my earthly lot.
Yet was there one sweet happiness that blesses
The life of woman, which to me came not.

"I knew the hope of motherhood; a season
I felt a fluttering heart beat 'neath my own;
A little cry—then silence. For that reason
I dare, to you, my only wish make known.
The babe who grew to angelhood in heaven,
I never watched unfold from child to man.
And so I ask, that unto me be given
That motherhood, which was God's primal plan.

"All womankind He meant to share its glories;
He meant us all to nurse our babes to rest.
To croon them songs, to tell them sleepy stories,
Else why the wonder of a woman's breast?
He must provide for all earth's cheated mothers
In His vast heavens of shining sphere on sphere,
And with my son, there must be many others—
My spirit children who will claim me here.

"Fair creatures by my loving thoughts created—
Too finely fashioned for a mortal birth—
Between the borders of two worlds they waited
Until they saw my spirit leave the earth.
In God's great nursery they must be waiting
To welcome me with many an infant wile.
Now let me go and satisfy this longing
To mother children for a little while."

SLEEP'S TREACHERY

As the gray twilight, tiptoed down the deep
And shadowy valley, to the day's dark end,
She whom I thought my ever-faithful friend,
Fair-browed, calm-eyed and mother-bosomed Sleep,
Met me with smiles. "Poor longing heart, I keep
Sweet joy for you," she murmured. "I will send
One whom you love, with your own soul to blend
In visions, as the night hours onward creep."

I trusted her; and watched by starry beams,
I slumbered soundly, free from all alarms.
Then not my love, but one long banished came,
Led by false Sleep, down secret stairs of dreams
And clasped me, unresisting in fond arms.
Oh, treacherous sleep—to sell me to such shame!

ART VERSUS CUPID

[A room in a private house. A maiden sitting before a grate fire meditating.]

Maiden

Now have I fully fixed upon my part.
Good-bye to dreams; for me a life of art!
Beloved art! Oh, realm serene and fair,
Above the mean and sordid world of care,
Above earth's small ambitions and desires!
Art! art! the very word my soul inspires!
From foolish memories it sets me free.
Not what has been, but that which is to be
Absorbs me now. Adieu to vain regret!
The bow is tensely drawn—the target set.

[A knock at the door.]

Maid (*aside*).

The night is dark and chill; the hour is late.

(*Aloud*)

Who knocks upon my door?

A Voice Outside

'Tis I, your fate!

Maid

Thou dost deceive, not me, but thine own self.
My fate is not a wandering, vagrant elf.
My fate is here, within this throbbing heart
That beats alone for glory, and for art.

Voice

[Another knock at door.]

Pray, let me in; I am so faint and cold.

[Door is pushed ajar. Enter Cupid, who approaches the fire with outstretched hands.]

Maid (*indignantly*)

Methinks thou art not faint, however cold,
But rather too courageous, and most bold;
Surprisingly ill-mannered, sir, and rude,
Without an invitation to intrude
Into my very presence.

Cupid (*warming his hands*)

But, you see,

Girls never mind a little chap like me.
They're always watching for me on the sly,
And hoping I will call.

Maid (*haughtily*)

Indeed, not I!

My heart has listened to a sweeter voice,
A clarion call that gives command—not choice.
And I have answered to that call, "I come;"
To other voices shall my ears be dumb.
To art alone I consecrate my life—
Art is my spouse, and I his willing wife.

Cupid (*slowly, gazing in the grate*)

Art is a sultan, and you must divide
His love with many another ill-fed bride.
Now I know one who worships you alone.

Maid (*impatiently*)

I will not listen! for the dice is thrown
And art has won me. On my brow some day
Shall rest the laurel wreath—

Cupid (*sitting down and looking at maid critically*)

Just let me say
I think sweet orange blossoms under lace
Are better suited to your type of face.

Maid (*ignoring interruption*)

I yet shall stand before an audience
That listens as one mind, absorbed, intense,
And with my genius I shall rouse its cheers,
Still it to silence, soften it to tears,
Or wake its laughter. Oh, the play! the play!
The play's the thing! My boy, *the play!!*

Cupid (*suddenly clapping his hands*)

Oh, say!
I know a splendid role for you to take,
And one that always keeps the house awake—
And calls for pretty dressing. Oh, it's great!

Maid (*excitedly*)

Well, well, what is it? Wherefore make me wait?

Cupid (*tapping his brow, thoughtfully*)

How is it those lines run—oh, now I know;
You make a stately entrance—measured—slow—
To stirring music; then you kneel and say
Something about—to honor and obey—
For better and for worse—till death do part.

Maid (*angrily*)

Be still, you foolish boy; that is not *art.*

Cupid (*seriously*)

She needs great skill who takes the role of wife
In God's stupendous drama human life.

Maid (*suddenly becoming serious*)

So I once thought! Oh, once my very soul
Was filled and thrilled with dreaming of that role.
Life seemed so wonderful; it held for me
No purpose, no ambition, but to be
Loving and loved. My highest thought of fame
Was some day bearing my dear lover's name.
Alone, I ofttimes uttered it aloud,
Or wrote it down, half timid, and all proud
To see myself lost utterly in him:
As some small star might joy in growing dim
When sinking in the sun; or as the dew,
Forgetting the brief little life it knew
In space, might on the ocean's bosom fall
And ask for nothing—only to give all.

Cupid (*aside*)

Now, ***that's*** the talk—it's music to my ear
After that stuff on "art" and a "career."
I hope she'll keep it up.

Maiden (*continuing her reverie*)

Again my dream
Shaped into changing pictures. I would seem
To see myself in beautiful array
Move down the aisle upon my wedding day;
And then I saw the modest living-room
With lighted lamp, and fragrant plants in bloom,
And books and sewing scattered all about,
And just we two alone.

Cupid (in glee aside)

There's not a doubt
I'll land her yet!

Maiden

My dream kaleidoscope
Changed still again, and framed love's dearest hope—
The trinity of home; and life was good
And all its deepest meaning understood.

[Sits lost in a dream. Behind scenes a voice sings a lullaby, "Beautiful Land of Nod." Cupid in ecstasy tiptoes about and clasps his hands in delight.]

Another scene! a matron in her prime,
I saw myself glide peacefully with time
Into the quiet middle years, content
With simple joys the dear home circle lent.
My sons and daughters made my diadem;
I saw my happy youth renewed in them.
The pain of growing old lost all its sting,
For Love stood near—in Winter, as in Spring.

[Cupid tiptoes to door and makes a signal. Maiden starts up dramatically.]

'Twas but a dream! I woke all suddenly.
The world had changed! And now life means to me
My art—the stage—excitement and the crowd—
The glare of many foot-lights—and the loud
Applause of men, as I cry in rage,
"Give me the dagger!" or creep down the stage
In that sleep-walking scene. Oh, art like mine
Will send the chills down every listener's spine!

And when I choose, salt tears shall freely flow
As in the moonlight I cry, "Romeo! Romeo!
Oh, wherefore art thou, Romeo?"
Ay, 'tis done
My dream of home life.

Cupid

It is but begun.

Maiden

The heart but once can dream a dream so fair,
And so henceforth love thoughts I do forswear;
Since faith in love has crumbled to the dust,
In fame alone, I put my hope and trust.

[Cupid at the door beckons excitedly. Enter lover with outstretched arms.]

Cupid

Here's one who will explain yourself to you
And make that old sweet dream of love come true.
Fix up your foolish quarrel; time is brief—
So waste no more of it in doubt or grief.

[The lovers meet and embrace.]

Cupid (in doorway)

Warm lip to lip, and heart to beating heart,
The cast is made—My Lady has her part.

CURTAIN

THE REVOLT OF VASHTI

(FROM THE DRAMA OF MIZPAH)

Ahasueras

Is this the way to greet thy loving spouse,
But now returned from scenes of blood and strife?
I pray thee raise thy veil and let me gaze
Upon that beauty which hath greater power
To conquer me than all the arts of war!

Vashti

My beauty! Aye, my *beauty!* I do hold,
In thy regard, no more an honored place
Than yonder marble pillar, or the gold
And jeweled wine cup which thy lips caress.
Thou would'st degrade me in the people's sight!

Ahasueras

Degrade thee, Vashti? Rather do I seek
To show my people who are gathered here
How, as the consort of so fair a queen,
I feel more pride than as the mighty king:
For there be many rulers on the earth,
But only *one* such queen. Come, raise thy veil!

Vashti

Aye! only *one* such queen! A queen is one
Who shares her husband's greatness and his throne.
I am no more than yonder dancing girl
Who struts and smirks before a royal court!
But I will loose my veil and loose my tongue!

Now listen, sire—my master and my king;
And let thy princes and the court give ear!
'Tis time all heard how Vashti feels her shame.

Ahasueras

Shame is no word to couple with thy name!
Shame and a spotless woman may not meet,
Even in a sentence. Choose another word.

Vashti

Aye, *shame,* my lord—there is no synonym
That can give voice to my ignoble state.
To be a thing for eyes to gaze upon,
Yet held an outcast from thy heart and mind;
To hear my beauty praised but not my worth;
To come and go at Pleasure's beck and call,
While barred from Wisdom's conclaves! Think ye *that*
A noble calling for a noble dame?
Why, any concubine amongst thy train
Could play my royal part as well as I—
Were she as fair!

Ahasueras

Queen Vashti, art thou *mad?*
I would behead another did he dare
To so besmirch thee with comparison.

Vashti (*to the court*)

Gaze now your fill! Behold Queen Vashti's eyes!
How large they gleam beneath her inch of brow!
How like a great white star, her splendid face
Shines through the midnight forest of her hair!
And see the crushed pomegranite of her mouth!
Observe her arms, her throat, her gleaming breasts,
Whereon the royal jewels rise and fall!—

And note the crescent curving of her hips,
And lovely limbs suggested 'neath her robes!
Gaze, gaze, I say, for these have made her queen!
She hath no mind, no heart, no dignity,
Worth royal recognition and regard;
But her fair body approbation meets
And whets the sated appetite of kings!
Now ye have seen what she was bid to show.
The queen hath played her part and begs to go.

Ahasueras

Aye, Vashti, go and never more return!
Not only hast thou wronged thine own true lord,
And mocked and shamed me in the people's eyes,
But thou hast wronged all princes and all men
By thy pernicious and rebellious ways.
Queens act and subjects imitate. So let
Queen Vashti weigh her conduct and her words,
Or be no more called "queen!"

Vashti

I was a princess ere I was a queen,
And worthy of a better fate than this!
There lies the crown that made me queen in name!
Here stands the woman—wife in name alone!
Now, no more queen—nor wife—but woman still—
Aye, and a woman strong enough to be
Her own avenger.

THE CHOOSING OF ESTHER

(FROM THE DRAMA OF MIZPAH)

Ahasueras

Tell me thy name!

Esther

My name, great sire, is Esther.

Ahasueras

So thou art Esther? Esther! 'tis a name
Breathed into sound as softly as a sigh.
A woman's name should melt upon the lips
Like Love's first kisses, and thy countenance
Is fit companion for so sweet a name!

Esther

Thou art most kind. I would my name and face
Were mine own making and not accident.
Then I might feel elated at thy praise,
Where now I feel confusion.

Ahasueras

Thou hast wit
As well as beauty, Esther. Both are gems
That do embellish woman in man's sight.
Yet they are gems of second magnitude!
Dost *thou* possess the one great perfect gem—
The matchless jewel of the world called *love?*

Esther

Sire, in the heart of every woman dwells
That wondrous perfect gem!

Ahasueras

Then, Esther, speak!
And tell me what is *love!* I fain would know
Thy definition of that much-mouthed word,
By woman most employed—least understood.

Esther

What can a humble Jewish maiden know
That would instruct a warrior and a king?
I have but dreamed of love as maidens will,
While thou hast known its fulness. All the world
Loves Great Ahasueras!

Ahasueras

All the world
Fears great Ahasueras! Kings, my child,
Are rarely loved as anything but kings.
Love, as I see it in the court and camp,
Means seeking royal favor. I would know
How love is fashioned in a maiden's dreams.

Esther

Sire, love seeks nothing that kings can bestow.
Love is the king of all kings here below;
Love makes the monarch but a bashful boy,
Love makes the peasant monarch in his joy;
Love seeks not place, all places are the same,
When lighted by the radiance of love's flame.
Who deems proud love could fawn to power and splendor
Hath known not love, but some base-born pretender.

Ahasueras

If this be love, I would know more of it.
Speak on, fair Esther! What is love beside?

Esther

Love is in all things, all things are in love.
Love is the earth, the sea, the skies above;
Love is the bird, the blossom, and the wind;
Love hath a million eyes, yet love is blind;
Love is a tempest, awful in its might;
Love is the silence of a moon-lit night;
Love is the aim of every human soul;
And he who hath not loved hath missed life's goal!

Ahasueras

But tell me of thyself, of thine own dreams!
How wouldst thou love, and how be loved again?

Esther

Who most doth love thinks least of love's return;
She is content to feel the passion burn
In her own bosom, and its sacred fire
Consumes each selfish purpose and desire.
'Tis in the giving, love's best rapture lies,
Not in the counting of the things it buys.

Ahasueras

Yet, is there not vast anguish and despair
In love that finds no answering word or smile?

Esther

So radiant is love, it lends a glow
To each dark sorrow and to every woe.
To love completely is to part with pain,

Nor is there mortal who can love in vain.
Love is its own reward, it pays full measure,
And in love's sharpest grief lies subtlest pleasure.

Ahasueras

Methinks, a mighty warrior, lord or king
Must in thy fancy play the lover's part;
None else could wake such reverential thought.

Esther

When woman loves one born of lowly state,
Her thought gives crown and scepter to her mate;
Yet be he king, or chief of some great clan,
She loves him but as woman loves a man.
Monarch or peasant, 'tis the same, I wis
When once she gives him love's surrendering kiss.

HONEYMOON SCENE

(FROM THE DRAMA OF MIZPAH)

Ahasueras

What were thy thoughts, sweet Esther? Something passed
Across thy face, that for a moment veiled
Thy soul from mine, and left me desolate.
Thy thoughts were not of me?

Esther

Aye, *all* of thee!
I wondered, if in truth, thou were content
With me—thy choice. Was there no other one
Of all who passed before thee at thy court
Whose memory pursues thee with regret?

Ahasueras

I do confess I much regret that day
And wish I could relive it.

Esther

Oh! My lord!

Ahasueras

Yea! I regret those hours I wasted on
The poor procession that preceded thee.
Hadst thou come first, then all the added wealth
Of one long day of loving thee were mine—
A boundless fortune squandered. Though I live
To three score years and ten, as I do hope,
In wedded love beside thee, that one day
Was filched from me and cannot be restored.

Esther

And then to think how frightened and abashed
I hung outside thy gates from early morn,
Not daring to go in and meet thine eyes,
Till pitying twilight clothed me in her veil,
And evening walked beside me to thy door.

Ahasueras

So it was thou, fair thief, who stole that day,
And made me poorer, by—how many hours?

Esther

Full eight, I think. They seemed a hundred then,
And now time flies a hundred times too fast.

Ahasueras

Then eight more kisses do I claim from thee,
This very hour—first tithes of many due.
I shall exact these payments as I will,
And if they be not ready on demand,
I'll lock thee in the prison of my arms,
Like this—and take them so—and so—and so!

Esther

But kings must think of other things than love
And live for other aims than happiness.
I would not drag thee from thy altitude
Of mighty ruler and great conqueror
To chain thee by my side.

Ahasueras

Such slavery
Would please me better than to conquer earth
Without thee, Esther. I have stood on heights
And heard the cheers of multitudes below;

Have known the loneliness of being great.
Now, let me live and love thee, like a man,
Forgetting I am king—
I am content.

Esther

Content is not the pathway to great deeds.
As man, I hold thee higher than all kings;
As king, thou must stand higher than all men
In other eyes. Let no one say of me:
"She spoiled his greatness by her littleness;
She made a languorous lover of a king,
And silenced war-cries on commanding lips—
With honeyed kisses; made her woman's arms
Preferred to armor, and her couch to tents,
Until the kingdom, with no guiding hand,
Plunged down to ruin."

Ahasueras

Thou wouldst have me go—
So soon thy heart hath wearied?

Esther

My heart is bursting with its love for thee!
Canst thou not feel its fervor? But great men
Need wiser guidance than a woman's heart.
My pride in thee is equal to my love,
And I would have thee greater than thou art—
Aye, greater than all other men on earth—
Though forced long years to feed my hungry heart
On food of memories and wine of tears,
Wert thou but winning glory and renown.

Ahasueras

Thou art most noble, Esther; thou art fit
To be the consort of a king of kings.

But I have chewed upon ambition's husks
And starved for love through all my manhood's years;
And now the mighty gods have seen it fit
To spread love's banquet and to name thee host,
May I not feast my fill? O Esther, take
The tempting nectar of those lips away
And give me wine to rouse the brute in me,
To make me thirst for blood instead of love!
Wine! Wine! I say!

Esther

Ahasueras, wait!
Methinks good music is wine turned to sound.
Here comes thy minstrel with an offering
Pressed from the ripened fruit of my fond heart.
Mine own the words and mine the melody
And may it linger longer in thine ear
Than on thy lip would stay the taste of wine.
Sing on!

Minstrel

When from the field returning,
Love is a warrior's yearning,
Love in his heart is burning,
Love is his dream.
Talk not to him of glory,
Speak not of faces gory,
Sing of love's tender story,
Make it thy theme.
Sing of his lady's tresses,
Sing of the smile that blesses,
Sing of the sweet caresses,
And yet again
Sing of fair children's faces,

Sing of the dear home graces,
Sing till the vacant places,
Ring with thy strain.
Yet as the days go speeding,
Shall he arise unheeding
Love songs or words of pleading,
Strong in his might!
Helmet and armor wearing,
Hies he to deeds of daring,
Forth to the battle faring,
Back to the fight.
Sing now of ranks contending,
Sing of loud voices blending,
Sing of great warriors sending
Death to their foes!
Sing of war missiles humming,
Strike into martial drumming,
Sing of great victory coming,
As forth he goes.
Back to the battle faring,
Back into deeds of daring,
Back to the fight.

Ahasueras

No less a lover but a greater man,
A better warrior and a nobler king,
I will be from this hour for thy dear sake.

THE COST

God finished woman in the twilight hour
And said, "To-morrow thou shalt find thy place:
Man's complement, the mother of the race—
With love the motive power—
The one compelling power."

All night she dreamed and wondered. With the light
Her lover came—and then she understood
The purpose of her being. Life was good
And all the world seemed right—
And nothing was, but right.

She had no wish for any wider sway:
By all the questions of the world unvexed,
Supremely loving and superbly sexed,
She passed upon her way—
Her feminine fair way.

But God neglected, when He fashioned man,
To fuse the molten splendor of his mind
With that sixth sense He gave to womankind.
And so He marred His plan—
Aye, marred His own great plan.

She asked so little, and so much she gave,
That man grew selfish: and she soon became,
To God's great sorrow and the whole world's shame,
Man's sweet and patient slave—
His uncomplaining slave.

Yet in the nights (oh! nights so dark and long)
She clasped her little children to her breast
And wept. And in her anguish of unrest
She thought upon her wrong;
She knew how great her wrong.

And one sad hour, she said unto her heart,
"Since thou art cause of all my bitter pain,
I bid thee abdicate the throne: let brain
Rule now, and do his part—
His masterful strong part."

She wept no more. By new ambition stirred
Her ways led out, to regions strange and vast.
Men stood aside and watched, dismayed, aghast,
And all the world demurred—
Misjudged her, and demurred.

Still on and up, from sphere to widening sphere,
Till thorny paths bloomed with the rose of fame.
Who once demurred, now followed with acclaim:
The hiss died in the cheer—
The loud applauding cheer.

She stood triumphant in that radiant hour,
Man's mental equal, and competitor.
But ah! the cost! from out the heart of her
Had gone love's motive power—
Love's all-compelling power.

RETROSPECTION

I look down the lengthening distance
  Far back to youth's valley of hope.
How strange seemed the ways of existence,
  How infinite life and its scope.

What dreams, what ambitions came thronging
  To people a world of my own!
How the heart in my bosom was longing,
  For pleasures and places unknown.

But the hill tops of pleasure and beauty,
  Were covered with mist at the dawn;
And only the rugged road Duty
  Shone clear, as my feet wandered on.

I loved not the path and its leading,
  I hated the rocks and the dust;
But a Voice from the Silence was pleading,
  It spoke but one syllable—"Trust."

I saw as the morning grew older
  The fair flowered hills of delight,
And the feet of my comrades grew bolder;
  They hurried away from my sight.

And when on the pathway I faltered,
  And when I rebelled at my fate,
The Voice, with assurance unaltered,
  Again spoke one syllable—"Wait."

Along the hard highway I traveled,
And saw, with dim vision, how soon
The morning's gold locks were unraveled,
By fingers of amorous noon.

A turn in the pathway of duty—
I stood in the perfect day's prime,
Close, close to the hillside of beauty;
The Voice from the Silence said, "Climb."

The road to the Beautiful Regions
Lies ever through Duty's hard way.
Oh, ye who go searching in legions,
Know this and be patient to-day.

THE HOUSE OF LIFE

All wondering and eager eyed, within her portico,
I made my plea to Hostess Life, one morning long ago.
"Pray, show me this great house of thine, nor close a single door;
But let me wander where I will and climb from floor to floor!
For many rooms, and curious things, and treasures great and small,
Within your spacious mansion lie, and I would see them all."
Then Hostess Life turned silently, her searching gaze on me,
And with no word, she reached her hand and offered up the key.
It opened first the door of Hope, and long I lingered there,

Until I spied the room of Dreams, just higher by a stair.
And then a door whereon the one word "Happiness" was writ,
But when I tried the little key, I could not make it fit.
It turned the lock of Pleasure's room where first all seemed so bright,
But after I had stayed awhile, it somehow lost its light.
And wandering down a lonely hall, I came upon a room
Marked "Duty," and I entered it, to lose myself in gloom.
Along the shadowy halls I groped my weary way about
And found that from dull Duty's room a door of Toil led out.
It led out to another door, whereon a crimson stain
Made sullenly against the dark, these words: "The Room of Pain."
But, oh, the light! the light! the light! that spilled down from above,
And upward wound the stairs of Faith, right to the tower of Love.
And when I came forth from that place, I tried the little key,
And, lo! the door of Happiness swung open, wide and free.

THE VOICE

I dreamed a Voice, of one God-authorized,
Cried loudly thro' the world, "Disarm! Disarm!"
And there was consternation in the camps;
And men who strutted under braid and lace
Beat on their medaled breasts, and wailed, "Undone!"
The word was echoed from a thousand hills,
And shop and mill, and factory and forge,
Where throve the awful industries of death,
Hushed into silence. Scrawled upon the doors,
The passer read, "Peace bids her children starve."
But foolish women clasped their little sons
And wept for joy, not reasoning like men.

Again the Voice commanded: "Now go forth
And build a world for Progress and for Peace.
This work has waited since the earth was shaped;
But men were fighting, and they could not toil.
The needs of life outnumber needs of death.
Leave death with God. Go forth, I say, and build."

And then a sudden, comprehensive joy
Shone in the eyes of men; and one who thought
Only of conquests and of victories
Woke from his gloomy reverie and cried,
"Aye, come and build! I challenge all to try.
And I will make a world more beautiful
Than Eden was before the serpent came."

And like a running flame on western wilds,
Ambition spread from mind to listening mind,
And lo! the looms were busy once again,
And all the earth resounded with men's toil.

Vast palaces of Science graced the world;
Their banquet tables spread with feasts of truth
For all who hungered. Music kissed the air,
Once rent with boom of cannons. Statues gleamed
From wooded ways, where ambushed armies hid
In times of old. The sea and air were gay
With shining sails that soared from land to land.
A universal language of the world
Made nations kin, and poverty was known
But as a word marked "obsolete," like war.
The arts were kindled with celestial fire;
New poets sang so Homer's fame grew dim;
And brush and chisel gave the wondering race
Sublimer treasures than old Greece displayed.
Men differed still; fierce argument arose,
For men are human in this human sphere;
But unarmed Arbitration stood between
And Reason settled in a hundred hours
What War disputed for a hundred years.

Oh, that a Voice, of one God-authorized
Might cry to all mankind, Disarm! Disarm!

GOD'S ANSWER

Once in a time of trouble and of care
I dreamed I talked with God about my pain;
With sleepland courage, daring to complain
Of what I deemed ungracious and unfair.
"Lord, I have groveled on my knees in prayer
Hour after hour," I cried; "yet all in vain;
No hand leads up to heights I would attain,
No path is shown me out of my despair."

Then answered God: "Three things I gave to thee—
Clear brain, brave will, and strength of mind and heart,
All implements divine, to shape the way.
Why shift the burden of thy toil on Me?
Till to the utmost he has done his part
With all his might, let no man *dare* to pray."

THE EDICT OF THE SEX

Two thousand years had passed since Christ was born,
When suddenly there rose a mighty host
Of women, sweeping to a central goal
As many rivers sweep on to the sea.
They came from mountains, valleys, and from coasts,
And from all lands, all nations, and all ranks,
Speaking all languages, but thinking one.
And that one language—Peace.

"Listen," they said,
And straightway was there silence on the earth,
For men were dumb with wonder and surprise.
"Listen, O mighty masters of the world,
And hear the edict of all womankind:
Since Christ his new commandment gave to men,
Love one another, full two thousand years
Have passed away, yet earth is red with blood.
The strong male rulers of the world proclaim
Their weakness, when we ask that war shall cease.
Now will the poor weak women of the world
Proclaim their strength, and say that war shall end.
Hear, then, our edict: Never from this day
Will any woman on the crust of earth
Mother a warrior. We have sworn the oath
And will go barren to the waiting tomb
Rather than breed strong sons at war's behest,
Or bring fair daughters into life, to bear
The pains of travail, for no end but war.

Aye! let the race die out for lack of babes:
Better a dying race than endless wars!
Better a silent world than noise of guns
And clash of armies.

"Long we asked for peace,
And oft you promised—but to fight again.
At last you told us, war must ever be
While men existed, laughing at our plea
For the disarmament of all mankind.
Then in our hearts flamed such a mad desire
For peace on earth, as lights the world at times
With some great conflagration; and it spread
From distant land to land, from sea to sea,
Until all women thought as with one mind
And spoke as with one voice; and now behold!
The great Crusading Syndicate of Peace,
Filling all space with one supreme resolve.
Give us, O men, your word that war shall end:
Disarm the world, and we will give you sons—
Sons to construct, and daughters to adorn
A beautiful new earth, where there shall be
Fewer and finer people, opulence
And opportunity and peace for all.
Until you promise peace no shrill birth-cry
Shall sound again upon the aging earth.
We wait your answer."

And the world was still
While men considered.

THE WORLD-CHILD

At times I am the mother of the world;
And mine seem all its sorrows, and its fears.
That rose, which in each mother-heart is curled,
The rose of pity, opens with my tears,
And, waking in the night, I lie and hark
To the lone sobbing, and the wild alarms,
Of my World-child, a wailing in the dark:
The child I fain would shelter in my arms.
I call to it (as from another room
A mother calls, what time she cannot go):
"Sleep well, dear world; Love hides behind this gloom.
There is no need for wakefulness or woe,
The long, long night is almost past and gone,
The day is near." And yet the world weeps on.

Again I follow it, throughout the day.
With anxious eyes I see it trip and fall,
And hurt itself in many a foolish way:
Childlike, unheeding warning word or call.
I see it grasp, and grasping, break the toys
It cried to own, then toss them on the floor
And, breathless, hurry after fancied joys
That cease to please, when added to its store.
I see the lacerations on its hands,
Made by forbidden tools; but when it weeps,
I also weep, as one who understands;
And having been a child, the memory keeps.
Ah, my poor world, however wrong thy part,
Still is there pity in my mother-heart.

THE GOAL

All roads that lead to God are good;
  What matters it, your faith, or mine;
  Both center at the goal divine
Of love's eternal Brotherhood.

The kindly life in house or street;
  The life of prayer, and mystic rite;
  The student's search for truth and light;
These paths at one great junction meet.

Before the oldest book was writ,
  Full many a prehistoric soul
  Arrived at this unchanging goal,
Through changeless love, that led to it.

What matters that one found his Christ
  In rising sun, or burning fire;
  If faith within him did not tire,
His longing for the truth sufficed.

  Before our "Christian" hell was brought
  To edify a modern world,
  Full many a hate-filled soul was hurled
In lakes of fire by its own thought.

A thousand creeds have come and gone;
  But what is that to you or me?
  Creeds are but branches of a tree,
The root of love lives on and on.

Though branch by branch proves withered wood,
The root is warm with precious wine;
Then keep your faith, and leave me mine;
All roads that lead to God are good.

ON SEEING "THE HOUSE OF JULIA" AT HERCULANEUM

Not great Vesuvius, in all his ire,
Nor all the centuries, could hide your shame.
There is the little window where you came,
With eyes that woke the demon of desire,
And lips like rose leaves, fashioned out of fire;
And from the lava leaps the molten flame
Of your old sins. The walls cry out your name—
Your face seems rising from the funeral pyre.

There must have dwelt, within your fated town,
Full many a virtuous dame, and noble wife
Who made your beauty seem as star to sun;
How strange the centuries have handed down
Your name, fair Julia, of immoral life,
And left the others to oblivion.

A PRAYER

Master of sweet and loving lore,
  Give us the open mind
To know religion means no more,
  No less, than being kind.

Give us the comprehensive sight
  That sees another's need;
And let our aim to set things right
  Prove God inspired our creed.

Give us the soul to know our kin
  That dwell in flock and herd,
The voice to fight man's shameful sin
  Against the beast and bird.

Give us a heart with love so fraught
  For all created things,
That even our unspoken thought
  Bears healing on its wings.

Give us religion that will cope
  With life's colossal woes,
And turn a radiant face of hope
  On troops of pigmy foes.

Give us the mastery of our fate
  In thoughts so warm and white,
They stamp upon the brows of hate
  Love's glorious seal of light.

Give us the strong, courageous faith
That makes of pain a friend,
And calls the secret word of death
"Beginning," and not "end."

WHAT IS RIGHT LIVING?

What is right living? Just to do your best
When worst seems easier. To bear the ills
Of daily life with patient cheerfulness
Nor waste dear time recounting them.
To talk
Of hopeful things when doubt is in the air.
To count your blessings often, giving thanks,
And to accept your sorrows silently,
Nor question why you suffer. To accept
The whole of life as one perfected plan,
And welcome each event as part of it.
To work, and love your work; to trust, to pray
For larger usefulness and clearer sight.
This is right living, pleasing in God's eyes,
Though you be heathen, heretic or Jew.

JUSTICE

However inexplicable may seem
Event and circumstance upon this earth,
Though favors fall on those whom none esteem,
And insult and indifference greet worth;
Though poverty repays the life of toil,
And riches spring where idle feet have trod,
And storms lay waste the patiently tilled soil—
Yet Justice sways the universe of God.

As undisturbed the stately stars remain
Beyond the glare of day's obscuring light,
So Justice dwells, though mortal eyes in vain
Seek it persistently by reason's sight.
But when, once freed, the illumined soul looks out.
Its cry will be, "O God, how could I doubt!"

TIME'S GAZE

Time looked me in the eyes while passing by
The milestone of the year. That piercing gaze
Was both an accusation and reproach.
No speech was needed. In a sorrowing look
More meaning lies than in complaining words,
And silence hurts as keenly as reproof.

Oh, opulent, kind giver of rich hours,
How have I used thy benefits! As babes
Unstring a necklace, laughing at the sound
Of priceless jewels dropping one by one,
So have I laughed while precious moments rolled
Into the hidden corners of the past.
And I have let large opportunities
For high endeavor move unheeded by,
While little joys and cares absorbed my strength.

And yet, dear Time, set to my credit this:
Not one white hour have I made black with hate,
Nor wished one living creature aught but good.

Be patient with me. Though the sun slants west,
The day has not yet finished, and I feel
Necessity for action and resolve
Bear in upon my consciousness. I know
The earth's eternal need of earnest souls,
And the great hunger of the world for Love.
I know the goal to high achievement lies
Through the dull pathway of self-conquest first;

And on the stairs of little duties done
We climb to joys that stand thy test. O Time,
Be patient with me, and another day,
Perchance, in passing by, thine eyes may smile.

THE TWO AGES

On great cathedral windows I have seen
A summer sunset swoon and sink away,
Lost in the splendors of immortal art.
Angels and saints and all the heavenly hosts,
With smiles undimmed by half a thousand years,
From wall and niche have met my lifted gaze.
Sculpture and carving and illumined page,
And the fair, lofty dreams of architects,
That speak of beauty to the centuries—
All these have fed me with divine repasts.
Yet in my mouth is left a bitter taste,
The taste of blood that stained that age of art.

Those glorious windows shine upon the black
And hideous structure of the guillotine:
Beside the haloed countenance of saints
There hangs the multiple and knotted lash.
The Christ of love, benign and beautiful,
Looks at the torture-rack, by hate conceived
And bigotry sustained. The prison cell,
With blood-stained walls, where starving men went mad,
Lies under turrets matchless in their grace.

God, what an age! How was it that You let
Colossal genius and colossal crime
Walk for a hundred years across the earth,
Like giant twins? How was it that the minds,
Conceiving such vast beauty for the world,
And such large hopes of heaven, could entertain
Such hellish projects for humanity?
How could the hand that with consummate skill
And loving patience limned the luminous page,
Drop pen and brush, and seize the branding-rod,
To scourge a brother for his differing faith?

Not great this age, in beauty or in art.
Little is wrought to-day that shall endure,
For earth's adornment, through long centuries.
Not ours the fervid worship of a God
That wastes its splendid opulence on glass,
Leaving but hate, to give its mortal kin.
Yet great this age: its mighty work is man
Knowing himself, the universal life.
And great our faith, which shows itself in works
For human freedom and for racial good.
The true religion lies in being kind.
No age is greater than its faith is broad.
Through liberty and love men climb to God.

LOVE, TIME, AND WILL

A soul immortal, Time, God everywhere,
Without, within—how can a heart despair,
Or talk of failure, obstacles, and doubt?
(What proofs of God? The little seeds that sprout,
Life, and the solar system, and their laws.
Nature? Ah, yes; but what was Nature's cause?)

All mighty words are short. God, life, and death,
War, peace, and truth, are uttered in a breath.
And briefly said are love, and will, and time;
Yet in them lies a majesty sublime.

Love is the vast constructive power of space;
Time is the hour which calls it into place;
Will is the means of using time and love,
And bringing forth the heart's desires thereof.

The way is love, the time is now, and will
The patient method. Let this knowledge fill
Thy consciousness, and fate and circumstance.
Environment, and all the ills of chance
Must yield before the concentrated might
Of those three words, as shadows yield to light.

Go charge thyself with love; be infinite
And opulent with thy large use of it:
'Tis from free sowing that full harvest springs;
Love God, and life and all created things.

Learn time's great value; to this mandate bow,
The hour of opportunity is Now.
And from thy will, as from a well-strung bow,
Let the swift arrows of thy wishes go.
Though sent into the distance and the dark,
The dawn shall prove thy arrows hit the mark.

THE WORKER AND THE WORK

In what I do I note the marring flaw,
  The imperfections of the work I see;
  Nor am I one who rather *do* than *be,*
Since its reversal is Creation's law.

Nay, since there lies a better and a worse,
  A lesser and a larger, in men's view,
  I would be better than the thing I do,
As God is greater than his universe.

He shaped himself before he shaped one world:
  A million eons, toiling day and night,
  He built himself to majesty and might,
Before the planets into space were hurled.

And when Creation's early work was done,
  What crude beginnings out of chaos came—
  A formless nebula, a wavering flame,
An errant comet, a voracious sun.

And, still unable to perfect his plan,
What awful creatures at his touch found birth—
Those protoplasmic monsters of the earth,
That owned the world before He fashioned Man.

And now, behold the poor unfinished state
Of this, his latest masterpiece! Then why,
Seeing the flaws in my own work, should I
Be troubled that no voice proclaims it great?

Before me lie the cycling rounds of years;
With this small earth will die the thing I do:
The thing I am, goes journeying onward through
A million lives, upon a million spheres.

My work I build, as best I can and may,
Knowing all mortal effort ends in dust.
I build myself, not as I may, but must,
Knowing, or good, or ill, that self must stay.

Along the ages, out, and on, afar,
Its journey leads, and must perforce be made.
Likewise its choice, with things of shame and shade,
Or up the path of light, from star to star.

When all these solar systems shall disperse,
Perchance this labor, and this self-control,
May find reward; and my completed soul
Will fling in space, a little universe.

ART THOU ALIVE?

Art thou alive? Nay, not too soon reply,
Tho' hand, and foot, and lip, and ear, and eye,
Respond, and do thy bidding; yet may be
Grim death has done his direst work with thee.
Life, as God gives it, is a thing apart
From active body and from beating heart.
It is the vital spark, the unseen fire,
That moves the mind to reason and aspire;
It is the force that bids emotion roll,
In mighty billows from the surging soul.

It is the light that grows from hour to hour,
And floods the brain with consciousness of power;
It is the spirit dominating all,
And reaching God with its imperious call,
Until the shining glory of His face
Illuminates each sorrowful, dark place;
It is the truth that sets the bondsman free,
Knowing he will be what he wills to be.
With its unburied dead the earth is sad.
Art thou alive? Proclaim it and be glad.
Perchance the dead may hear thee and arise,
Knowing they live, and *here* is Paradise.

TO-DAY

I love this age of energy and force,
Expectantly I greet each pregnant hour;
Emerging from the all-creative source,
Supreme with promise, imminent with power.
The strident whistle and the clanging bell,
The noise of gongs, the rush of motored things
Are but the prophet voices which foretell
A time when thought may use unfettered wings.

Too long the drudgery of earth has been
A barrier 'twixt man and his own mind.
Remove the stone, and lo! the Christ within;
For He is there, and who so seeks shall find.
The Great Inventor is the Modern Priest.
He paves the pathway to a higher goal.
Once from the grind of endless toil released
Man will explore the kingdom of his soul.

And all this restless rush, this strain and strife,
This noise and glare is but the fanfarade
That ushers in the more majestic life
Where faith shall walk with science, unafraid.
I feel the strong vibrations of the earth,
I sense the coming of an hour sublime,
And bless the star that watched above my birth
And let me live in this important time.

THE LADDER

Unto each mortal who comes to earth
A ladder is given by God, at birth,
And up this ladder the soul must go,
Step by step, from the valley below;
Step by step, to the center of space,
On this ladder of lives, to the Starting Place.

In time departed (which yet endures)
I shaped my ladder, and you shaped yours.
Whatever they are—they are what we made:
A ladder of light, or a ladder of shade,
A ladder of love, or a hateful thing,
A ladder of strength, or a wavering string.
A ladder of gold, or a ladder of straw,
Each is the ladder of righteous law.

We flung them away at the call of death,
We took them again with the next life breath.
For a keeper stands by the great birth gates;
As each soul passes, its ladder waits.

Though mine be narrow, and yours be broad,
On my ladder alone can I climb to God.
On your ladder alone can your feet ascend,
For none may borrow, and none may lend.

If toil and trouble and pain are found,
Twisted and corded, to form each round,

If rusted iron or mouldering wood
Is the fragile frame, you must make it good.
You must build it over and fashion it strong,
Though the task be hard as your life is long;
For up this ladder the pathway leads
To earthly pleasures and spirit needs;
And all that may come in another way
Shall be but illusion, and will not stay.

In useless effort, then, waste no time;
Rebuild your ladder, and climb and climb.

WHO IS A CHRISTIAN?

Who is a Christian in this Christian land
Of many churches and of lofty spires?
Not he who sits in soft upholstered pews
Bought by the profits of unholy greed,
And looks devotion, while he thinks of gain.
Not he who sends petitions from the lips
That lie to-morrow in the street and mart.
Not he who fattens on another's toil,
And flings his unearned riches to the poor,
Or aids the heathen with a lessened wage,
And builds cathedrals with an increased rent.

Christ, with Thy great, sweet, simple creed of love,
How must Thou weary of Earth's "Christian" clans,
Who preach salvation through Thy saving blood
While planning slaughter of their fellow men.

Who is a Christian? It is one whose life
Is built on love, on kindness and on faith;
Who holds his brother as his other self;
Who toils for justice, equity and PEACE,
And hides no aim or purpose in his heart
That will not chord with universal good.

Though he be pagan, heretic or Jew,
That man is Christian and beloved of Christ.

THE GOAL

All your wonderful inventions,
  All your houses vast and tall,
All your great gun-fronted vessels,
  Every fort and every wall,
With the passing of the ages,
  They shall pass and they shall fall.

As you sit among the idols
  That your avarice gave birth,
As you count the hoarded treasures
  That you think of priceless worth,
Time is digging tombs to hide them
  In the bosom of the earth.

There shall come a great convulsion
  Or a rushing tidal wave,
Or a sound of mighty thunders
  From a subterranean cave,
And a boasting world's possessions
  Shall be buried in one grave.

From the Centuries of Silence
We are bringing back again
Buried vase and bust and column
And the gods they worshiped then,
In the strange unmentioned cities
Built by prehistoric men.

Did they steal, and lie, and slaughter?
Did they steep their souls in shame?
Did they sell eternal virtues
Just to win a passing fame?
Did they give the gold of honor
For the tinsel of a name?

We are hurrying all together
Toward the silence and the night;
There is nothing worth the seeking
But the sun-kissed moral height—
There is nothing worth the doing
But the doing of the *right*.

THE SPUR

I asked the rock beside the road what joy existence lent.
It answered, "For a million years my heart has been
content."

I asked the truffle-seeking swine, as rooting by he went,
"What is the keynote of your life?" He grunted out,
"Content."

I asked a slave, who toiled and sang, just what his singing meant.
He plodded on his changeless way, and said, "I am
content."

I asked a plutocrat of greed, on what his thoughts were bent.
He chinked the silver in his purse, and said, "I am content."

I asked the mighty forest tree from whence its force was sent.
Its thousand branches spoke as one, and said, "From
discontent."

I asked the message speeding on, by what great law was rent
God's secret from the waves of space. It said, "From
discontent."

I asked the marble, where the works of God and man
were blent,
What brought the statue from the block. It answered
"Discontent."

I asked an Angel, looking down on earth with gaze
intent,
How man should rise to larger growth. Quoth he,
"Through discontent."

AWAKENED!

Slowly the People waken; they have been,
Like weary soldiers, sleeping in their tents,
While traitors tiptoed through the silent camp
Intent on plunder. Suddenly a sound—
A careless movement of too bold a thief—
Starts one dull sleeper; then another stirs,
A third cries out a warning, and at last
The people are awake! Oh, when as one
The many rise, united and alert,
With Justice for their motto, they reflect
The mighty force of God's Omnipotence.
And nothing stands before them. Lusty Greed,
Tyrannical Corruption long in power,
And smirking Cant (whose right hand robs and slays
So that the left may dower Church and School),
Monopoly, whose mandate took from Toil
The Mother Earth, that Idleness might loll
And breed the Monster of Colossal Wealth—
All these must fall before the gathering Force

Of public indignation. That old strife
Which marks the progress of each century,
The war of Right with Might, is on once more,
And shame to him who does not take his stand.

This is the weightiest moment of all time,
And on the issues of the present hour
A nation's honor and a country's peace,
A People's future, aye, a World's, depends.

Until the vital questions of the day
Are solved and settled, and the spendthrift thieves
Who rob the coffers of the saving poor
Are led from fashion's feasts to prison fare,
And taught the saving grace of honest work—
Till Labor claims the privilege of toil
And toil the proceeds of its labor shares—
Let no man sleep, let no man dare to sleep!

SHADOWS

I am sorry in the gladness
Of the joys that crown my days,
For the souls that sit in sadness
Or walk uninviting ways.

On the radiance of my labor
That a loving fate bestowed,
Falls the shadow of my neighbor,
Crushed beneath a thankless load.

As the canticle of pleasure
From my lovelit altar rolls,
There is one discordant measure,
As I think of homeless souls.

And I know that grim old story,
Preached from pulpits, is not so,
For no God could sit in glory
And see sinners writhe below.

In that great eternal Center
Where all human life has birth,
Boundless love and pity enter
And flow downward to the earth.

And all souls in sin or sorrow
Are but passing through the night,
And I know on some to-morrow
God will love them into light.

THE NEW COMMANDMENT

"Let Go the Cross"—Gertrude Runshon

I heard a strange voice in the distance calling
As from a star an echo might be falling.

It spoke four syllables, concise and brief,
Charged with a God-sent message of relief:

Let go the cross! Oh, you who cling to sorrow,
Hark to the new command and comfort borrow.

Even as the Master left His cross below
And rose to Paradise, let go, let go.

Forget your wrongs, your troubles and your losses,
For with the tools of thought we build our crosses.

Forget your griefs, all grudges and all fear
And enter Paradise—its gates are near.

Heaven is a realm by loving souls created,
And hell was fashioned by the hearts that hated.

Love, hope and trust; believe all joys are yours,
Life pays the soul whose confidence endures,

The blows of adverse fate, by larger pleasures,
As after storms the soil yields fuller measures.

Let go the cross; roll self—the stone—away
And dwell with Love in Paradise to-day.

SUMMER DREAMS

When the Summer sun is shining,
And the green things push and grow,
Oft my heart runs over measure,
With its flowing fount of pleasure,
As I feel the sea winds blow;
Ah, then life is good, I know.

And I think of sweet birds building,
And of children fair and free;
And of glowing sun-kissed meadows,
And of tender twilight shadows,
And of boats upon the sea.
Oh, then life seems good to me!

Then unbidden and unwanted,
Come the darker, sadder sights;
City shop and stifling alley,
Where misfortune's children rally;
And the hot crime-breeding nights,
And the dearth of God's delights.

And I think of narrow prisons
Where unhappy songbirds dwell,
And of cruel pens and cages
Where some captured wild thing rages
Like a madman in his cell,
In the Zoo, the wild beasts' hell.

And I long to lift the burden
Of man's selfishness and sin;

And to open wide earth's treasures
Of God's storehouse, full of pleasures,
For my dumb and human kin,
And to ask the whole world in.

THE BREAKING OF CHAINS

Between the ringing of bells and the musical clang of chimes
I hear a sound like the breaking of chains, all through these Christmas times.
For the thought of the world is waking out of a slumber deep and long,
And the race is beginning to understand how Right can master Wrong.

And the eyes of the world are opening wide, and great are the truths they see;
And the heart of the world is singing a song, and its burden is "Be free!"
Now the thought of the world and the wish of the world and the song of the world will make
A force so strong that the fetters forged for a million years must break.

Fetters of superstitious fear have bound the race to creeds
That hindered the upward march of man to the larger faith he needs.
Fetters of greed and pride have made the race bow down to kings;
But the pompous creed and the costly throne must yield to simpler things.

The thought of the world has climbed above old paths
for centuries trod;
And cloth and crown no longer mean the "vested power
of God."
The race no longer bends beneath the weight of Adam's
sin,
But stands erect and knows itself the Maker's first of
kin.

And the need of the world and the wish of the world
and the song of the world I hear,
All through the clanging and clashing of bells, this
Christmas time o' the year;
And I hear a sound like the breaking of chains, and it
seems to say to me,
In the voice of One who spoke of old, "The Truth shall
make men free."

DECEMBER

Upon December's windy portico
The Old Year stood, and looked out where the sun
Went wading down the West, through drifting clouds.
"I, too, shall sink full soon to rest," he sighed,
"And follow where my children's feet have trod;
Brave January, beauteous May and June,
My lovely daughters, and my valiant sons,
All, all save one, have left me for that bourne
Men call the Past. It seems but yesterday
I saw fair August, laughing with the Sea,
Snaring the Earth with her seductive wiles,
And making conquest, even of the Sun.
Yet has she gone, and left me here to mourn."
Then spake December, from an open door:
"Father, the night grows cold; come in and rest.
Sit with me here beside this glowing grate;
I have not left thee; thou art not alone;
My house is thine; all warm with love and light,
And bright with holly and with cedar sweet.
My stalwart arm is thine to lean upon;
The feast is spread, I only wait for thee;
God smiles upon thy dead, smile thou on me."
Then through the open door the Old Year passed
And darkness settled on the outer world.

"THE WAY"

However certain of the way thou art,
Take not the self-appointed leader's part.
Follow no man, and by no man be led,
And no man lead. *Awake,* and go ahead.
Thy path, though leading straight unto the goal
Might prove confusing to another soul.
The goal is central; but from east, and west,
And north, and south, we set out on the quest;
From lofty mountains, and from valleys low:—
How could all find one common way to go?

Lord Buddha to the wilderness was brought.
Lord Jesus to the Cross. And yet, think not
By solitude, or cross, thou canst achieve,
Lest in thine own true Self thou dost believe.
Know thou art One, with life's Almighty Source,
Then are thy feet set on the certain Course.

Nor does it matter if thou feast, or fast,
Or what thy creed—or where thy lot is cast;
In halls of pleasure or in crowded mart,
In city streets, or from all men apart—
Thy path leads to the Light; and peace and power
Shall be thy portion, growing hour by hour.
Follow no man, and by no man be led.
And no man lead. But *know* and go ahead.

THE LEADER TO BE

What shall the leader be in that great day
When we who sleep and dream that we are slaves
Shall wake and know that Liberty is ours?
Mark well that word—not yours, not mine, but ours.
For through the mingling of the separate streams
Of individual protest and desire,
In one united sea of purpose, lies
The course to Freedom.

When Progression takes
Her undisputed right of way, and sinks
The old traditions and conventions where
They may not rise, what shall the leader be?

No mighty warrior skilled in crafts of war,
Sowing earth's fertile furrows with dead men
And staining crimson God's cerulean sea,
To prove his prowess to a shuddering world.

Nor yet a monarch with a silly crown
Perched on an empty head, an in-bred heir
To senseless titles and anemic blood.

No ruler, purchased by the perjured votes
Of striving demagogues whose god is gold.
Not one of these shall lead to Liberty.
The weakness of the world cries out for strength.
The sorrow of the world cries out for hope.
Its suffering cries for kindness.

He who leads
Must then be strong and hopeful as the dawn
That rises unafraid and full of joy
Above the blackness of the darkest night.
He must be kind to every living thing;
Kind as the Krishna, Buddha and the Christ,
And full of love for all created life.
Oh, not in war shall his great prowess lie,
Nor shall he find his pleasure in the chase.
Too great for slaughter, friend of man and beast,
Touching the borders of the Unseen Realms
And bringing down to earth their mystic fires
To light our troubled pathways, wise and kind
And human to the core, so shall he be,
The coming leader of the coming time.

THE GREATER LOVE

Hear thou my prayer, great God of opulence;
Give me no blessings, save as recompense
For blessings which I lovingly bestow
On needy stranger or on suffering foe.
If Wealth, by chance, should on my path appear,
Let Wisdom and Benevolence stand near,
And Charity within my portal wait,
To guard me from acquaintance intimate.

Yet in this intricate great art of living
Guide me away from misdirected giving,
And show me how to spur the laggard soul
To strive alone once more to gain the goal.

Repay my worldly efforts to attain
Only as I develop heart and brain;
Nor brand me with the "Dollar Sign" above
A bosom void of sympathy and love.

If on the carrying winds my name be blown
To any land or time beyond my own,
Let it not be as one who gained the day
By crowding others from the chosen way;
Rather as one who missed the highest place
Pausing to cheer spent runners in the race.
To do—to have—is lesser than to BE:
The greater boon I ask, dear God, from Thee.

THANK GOD FOR LIFE

Thank God for life, in such an age as this,
Rich with the promises of better things.
Thank God for being part of this great nation's heart,
Whose strong pulsations are not ruled by kings.

Our thanks for fearless and protesting speech
When cloven hoofs show 'neath the robes of state.
For us no servile song of "Kings can do no wrong."
Not royal birth, but worth, makes rulers great.

Thank God for peace within our border lands,
And for the love of peace within each soul.
Who thinks on peace has wrought, mosaic-squares of thought
In the foundation of our future goal.

Our thanks for love, and knowledge of love's laws.
Love is a greater power than vested might.
Love is the central source of all enduring force.
Love is the law that sets the whole world right.

Our thanks for that increasing torch of light
The tireless hand of science holds abroad.
And may its growing blaze shine on all hidden ways
Till man beholds the silhouette of God.

THE LAW

The sun may be clouded, yet ever the sun
Will sweep on its course till the cycle is run.
And when into chaos the systems are hurled,
Again shall the Builder reshape a new world.

Your path may be clouded, uncertain your goal;
Move on, for the orbit is fixed for your soul.
And though it may lead into darkness of night,
The torch of the Builder shall give it new light.

You were, and you will be; know this while you are:
Your spirit has traveled both long and afar.
It came from the Source, to the Source it returns;
The spark that was lighted eternally burns.

It slept in the jewel, it leaped in the wave;
It roamed in the forest, it rose from the grave;
It took on strange garbs for long eons of years,
And now in the soul of yourself it appears.

From body to body your spirit speeds on;
It seeks a new form, when the old one is gone;
And the form that it finds, is the fabric you wrought
On the loom of the mind, with the fibre of thought.

As dew is drawn upward, in rain to descend,
Your thoughts drift away and in destiny blend.
You cannot escape them; or petty, or great,
Or evil, or noble, they fashion your fate.

Somewhere on some planet, sometime and somehow,
Your life will reflect all the thoughts of your now.
The law is unerring; no blood can atone;
The structure you rear you must live in alone.

From cycle to cycle, through time and through space,
Your lives with your longings will ever keep pace.
And all that you ask for, and all you desire,
Must come at your bidding, as flames out of fire.

You are your own devil, you are your own God.
You fashioned the paths that your footsteps have trod.
And no one can save you from error or sin
Until you shall hark to the spirit within.

Once list to that voice and all tumult is done,
Your life is the life of the Infinite One;
In the hurrying race you are conscious of pause,
With love for the purpose and love for the cause.

TIME ENOUGH

I know it is early morning,
And hope is calling aloud,
And your heart is afire with Youth's desire
To hurry along with the crowd.
But linger a bit by the roadside,
And lend a hand by the way,
'Tis a curious fact that a generous act
Brings leisure and luck to a day.

I know it is only the noontime—
There is chance enough to be kind;
But the hours run fast when noon has passed,
And the shadows are close behind.
So think while the light is shining,
And act ere the set of the sun,
For the sorriest woe that a soul can know
Is to think what it might have done.

I know it is almost evening,
But the twilight hour is long.
If you listen and heed each cry of need
You can right full many a wrong.
For when we have finished the journey
We will all look back and say:
"On life's long mile there was nothing worth while
But the good we did by the way."

NEW YEAR'S DAY

When with clanging and with ringing
  Comes the year's initial day,
I can feel the rhythmic swinging
  Of the world upon its way;
And though Right still wears a fetter,
  And though Justice still is blind,
Time's beyond is always better
  Than the paths he leaves behind.

In our eons of existence,
  As we circle through the night,
We annihilate the distance
  'Twixt the darkness and the light.
From beginnings crude and lowly,
  Round and round our souls have trod
Through the circles, winding slowly
  Up to knowledge and to God.

With each century departed
  Some old evil found a tomb,
Some old truth was newly started
  In propitious soil to bloom.
With each epoch some condition
  That has handicapped the race
(Worn-out creed or superstition)
  Unto knowledge yields its place.

Though in folly and in blindness
  And in sorrow still we grope,

Yet in man's increasing kindness
Lies the world's stupendous hope;
For our darkest hour of errors
Is as radiant as the dawn,
Set beside the awful terrors
Of the ages that have gone.

And above the sad world's sobbing,
And the strife of clan with clan,
I can hear the mighty throbbing
Of the heart of God in man;
And a voice chants through the chiming
Of the bells, and seems to say,
We are climbing, we are climbing,
As we circle on our way.

LIFE IS A PRIVILEGE

Life is a privilege. Its youthful days
Shine with the radiance of continuous Mays.
To live, to breathe, to wonder and desire,
To feed with dreams the heart's perpetual fire;
To thrill with virtuous passions and to glow
With great ambitions—in one hour to know
The depths and heights of feeling—God! in truth
How beautiful, how beautiful is youth!

Life is a privilege. Like some rare rose
The mysteries of the human mind unclose.
What marvels lie in earth and air and sea,
What stores of knowledge wait our opening key,

What sunny roads of happiness lead out
Beyond the realms of indolence and doubt,
And what large pleasures smile upon and bless
The busy avenues of usefulness.

Life is a privilege. Though noontide fades
And shadows fall along the winding glades;
Though joy-blooms wither in the autumn air,
Yet the sweet scent of sympathy is there.
Pale sorrow leads us closer to our kind,
And in the serious hours of life we find
Depths in the soul of men which lend new worth
And majesty to this brief span of earth.

Life is a privilege. If some sad fate
Sends us alone to seek the exit gate;
If men forsake us as the shadows fall,
Still does the supreme privilege of all
Come in that reaching upward of the soul
To find the welcoming presence at the goal,
And in the knowledge that our feet have trod
Paths that lead from and must lead back to God.

IN AN OLD ART GALLERY

Before the statue of a giant Hun,
  There stood a dwarf, misshapen and uncouth.
  His lifted eyes seemed asking: "Why, in sooth,
Was I not fashioned like this mighty one?
Would God show favor to an older son
  Like earthly kings, and beggar without ruth
  Another, who sinned only by his youth?
Why should two lives in such divergence run?"

Strange, as he gazed, that from a vanished past
  No memories revived of war and strife,
    Of misused prowess, and of broken law.
That old Hun's spirit, in the dwarf recast,
  Lived out the sequence of an earthly life.
    It was the statue of himself he saw!

TRUE BROTHERHOOD

God, what a world, if men in street and mart
Felt that same kinship of the human heart
Which makes them, in the face of flame and flood,
Rise to the meaning of true Brotherhood!

THE DECADENT

Among the virile hosts he passed along,
  Conspicuous for an undetermined grace
  Of sexless beauty. In his form and face
God's mighty purpose somehow had gone wrong.
Then on his loom, he wove a careful song,
  Of sensuous threads; a wordy web of lace
  Wherein the primal passions of the race
And his own sins made wonder for the throng.

A little pen prick opened up a vein,
  And gave the finished mesh a crimson blot—
    The last consummate touch of studied art.
But those who knew strong passion and keen pain,
  Looked through and through the pattern and found
      not
    One single great emotion of the heart.

LORD, SPEAK AGAIN

When God had formed the Universe, He thought
Of all the marvels therein to be wrought
And to his aid then Motherhood was brought.

"My lesser self, the feminine of Me,
She will go forth throughout all time," quoth He,
"And make my world what I would have it be.

"For I am weary, having labored so,
And for a cycle of repose would go
Into that silence which but God may know.

"Therefore I leave the rounding of my plan
To Motherhood; and that which I began
Let woman finish in perfecting man.

"She is the soil: the human Mother Earth:
She is the sun, that calls the seed to earth.
She is the gardener, who knows its worth.

"From Me, all seed, of any kind must spring.
Divine the growth such seed and soil will bring.
For all is Me, and I am everything."

Thus having spoken to himself aloud,
His glorious face upon His breast He bowed,
And sought repose behind a wall of cloud.

Come forth, O God! though great thy thought and good,
In shaping woman for true Motherhood,
Lord, speak again; she has not understood.

The centuries pass: the cycles roll along—
The earth is peopled with a mighty throng,
Yet men are fighting and the world goes wrong.

Lord, speak again, ere yet it be too late,
Unloved, unwanted souls come through earth's gate:
The unborn child is given a dower of hate.

Thy world progresses in all ways save one.
In Motherhood, for which it was begun,
Lord, Lord, behold how little has been done!

Children are spawned like fishes in the sand.
With ignorance and crime they fill the land.
Lord, speak again, till mothers understand.

It is not all of Motherhood to know
Conception pleasure or deliverance woe.
Who plants the seed should help the shoot to grow.

Better a barren soil than weed and tare,
Or sickly plants that die for want of care
In poisonous jungles, void of sun and air.

True Motherhood is not alone to breed
The human race; it is to know and heed
Its holiest purpose and its highest need.

Lord, speak again, so woman shall be stirred
With the full meaning of that mighty word
True Motherhood. She has not rightly heard.

MY HEAVEN.

Unhoused in deserts of accepted thought,
And lost in jungles of confusing creeds,
My soul strayed, homeless, finding its own needs
Unsatisfied with what tradition taught.

The pros and cons, the little ifs and ands,
The but and maybe, and the this and that,
On which the churches thicken and grow fat,
I found but structures built on shifting sands.

And all their heavens were strange and far away,
And all their hells were made of human hate;
And since for death I did not care to wait,
A heaven I fashioned for myself one day.

Of happy thoughts I built it stone by stone,
With joy of life I draped each spacious room,
With love's great light I drove away all gloom,
And in the center I made God a throne.

And this dear heaven I set within my heart,
And carried it about with me alway,
And then the changing dogmas of the day
Seemed alien to my thoughts and held no part.

Now as I take my heaven from place to place
I find new rooms by love's revealing light,
And death will give me but a larger sight
To see my palace spreading into space.

LIFE

On a bleak, bald hill with a dull world under,
The dreary world of the Commonplace,
I have stood when the whole world seemed a blunder
Of dotard Time, in an aimless race.
With worry about me and want before me—
Yet deep in my soul was a rapture spring
That made me cry to the gray sky o'er me:
"Oh, I know this life is a goodly thing!"

I have given sweet years to a thankless duty
While cold and starving, though clothed and fed,
For a young heart's hunger for joy and beauty
Is harder to bear than the need of bread.
I have watched the wane of a sodden season,
Which let hope wither, and made care thrive,
And through it all, without earthly reason,
I have thrilled with the glory of being alive.

And now I stand by the great sea's splendor,
Where love and beauty feed heart and eye.
The brilliant light of the sun grows tender
As it slants to the shore of the by and by.
I prize each hour as a golden treasure—
A pearl Time drops from a broken string:
And all my ways are the ways of pleasure,
And I know this life is a goodly thing.

And I know, too, that not in the seeing,
Or having, or doing the things we would,

Lies that deep rapture that comes from being
At one with the Purpose which made all good.
And not from Pleasure the heart may borrow
That rare contentment for which we strive,
Unless through trouble, and want, and sorrow
It has thrilled with the glory of being alive.

GOD'S KIN

There is no summit you may not attain,
No purpose which you may not yet achieve,
If you will wait serenely and believe
Each seeming loss is but a step toward gain.

Between the mountain-tops lie vale and plain;
Let nothing make you question, doubt or grieve;
Give only good, and good alone receive;
And as you welcome joy, so welcome pain.

That which you most desire awaits your word;
Throw wide the door and bid it enter in.
Speak, and the strong vibrations shall be stirred;
Speak, and above earth's loud, unmeaning din
Your silent declarations shall be heard.
All things are possible to God's own kin.

CONQUEST

Talk not of strength, until your heart has known
And fought with weakness through long hours alone.

Talk not of virtue, till your conquering soul
Has met temptation and gained full control.

Boast not of garments, all unscorched by sin,
Till you have passed, unscathed, through fires within.

Oh, poor that pride the unscarred soldier shows,
Who safe in camp, has never faced his foes.

THE STATUE

A granite rock in the mountain side
Gazed on the world and was satisfied.
It watched the centuries come and go.
It welcomed the sunlight, yet loved the snow.
It grieved when the forest was forced to fall,
Yet joyed when steeples rose, white and tall,
In the valley below it, and thrilled to hear
The voice of the great town roaring near.

When the mountain stream from its idle play
Was caught by the mill wheel and borne away
And trained to labor, the gray rock mused
"Trees and verdure and stream are used
By Man the Master; but I remain
Friend of the mountain, and star, and plain,
Unchanged forever by God's decree,
While passing centuries bow to me."

Then all unwarned, with a mighty shock
Out of the mountain was wrenched the rock.
Bruised and battered and broken in heart,
It was carried away to the common mart,
Wrecked and ruined in piece and pride.
"Oh, God is cruel," the granite cried,
"Comrade of mountains, of stars the friend,
By all deserted, how sad my end."

A dreaming sculptor in passing by
Gazed at the granite with thoughtful eye.

Then stirred with a purpose supremely grand
He bade his dream in the rock expand.
And lo! from the broken and shapeless mass
That grieved and doubted, it came to pass
That a glorious statue of priceless worth
And infinite beauty, adorned the earth.

SIRIUS

"Since Sirius crossed the Milky Way, sixty thousand years have gone."—Garrett P. Serviss.

Since Sirius crossed the Milky Way
  Full sixty thousand years have gone,
Yet hour by hour, and day by day,
  This tireless star speeds on and on.

Methinks he must be moved to mirth
  By that droll tale of Genesis,
Which says creation had its birth
  For such a puny world as this.

To hear how One who fashioned all
  Those Solar Systems, tier on tiers,
Expressed in little Adam's fall
  The purpose of a million spheres.

And, witness of the endless plan,
  To splendid wrath he must be wrought
By pigmy creeds presumptuous man
  Sends forth as God's primeval thought.

Perchance from half a hundred stars
He hears as many curious things;
From Venus, Jupiter and Mars,
And Saturn with the beauteous rings,

There may be students of the Cause
Who send their revelations out,
And formulate their codes of laws,
With heavens for faith and hells for doubt.

On planets old ere form or place
Was lent to earth, may dwell—who knows—
A God-like and perfected race
That hails great Sirius as he goes.

In zones that circle moon and sun,
Twixt world and world, he may see souls
Whose span of earthly life is done,
Still journeying up to higher goals.

And on dead planets gray and cold
Grim spectral souls, that harbored hate
Life after life, he may behold
Descending to a darker fate.

And on his grand majestic course
He may have caught one glorious sight
Of that vast shining central Source
From which proceeds all Life, all Light.

Since Sirius crossed the Milky Way
Full sixty thousand years have gone,
No mortal man may bid him stay,
No mortal man may speed him on.

No mortal mind may comprehend
  What is beyond, what was before;
To God be glory without end,
  Let man be humble and adore.

AT FONTAINEBLEAU

At Fontainebleau, I saw a little bed
  Fashioned of polished wood, with gold ornate,
  Ambition, hope, and sorrow, aye, and hate
Once battled there, above a childish head,
And there in vain, grief wept, and memory plead
  It was so small! but Ah, dear God, how great
  The part it played in one sad woman's fate.
How wide the gloom, that narrow object shed.

The symbol of an over-reaching aim,
  The emblem of a devastated joy,
    It spoke of glory, and a blasted home:
Of fleeting honors, and disordered fame,
  And the lone passing of a fragile boy.

* * * * * * *

  It was the cradle of the King of Rome.

THE MASQUERADE

Look in the eyes of trouble with a smile,
Extend your hand and do not be afraid.
'Tis but a friend who comes to masquerade.
And test your faith and courage for awhile.

Fly, and he follows fast with threat and jeer.
Shrink, and he deals hard blow on stinging blow,
But bid him welcome as a friend, and lo!
The jest is off—the masque will disappear.

SYMPATHY

Is the way hard and thorny, oh, my brother?
Do tempests beat, and adverse wild winds blow?
And are you spent, and broken, at each nightfall,
Yet with each morn you rise and onward go?
Brother, I know, I know!
I, too, have journeyed so.

Is your heart mad with longing, oh, my sister?
Are all great passions in your breast aglow?
Does the white wonder of your own soul blind you,
And are you torn with rapture and with woe?
Sister, I know, I know!
I, too, have suffered so.

Is the road filled with snare and quicksand, pilgrim?
Do pitfalls lie where roses seem to grow?
And have you sometimes stumbled in the darkness,
And are you bruised and scarred by many a blow?
Pilgrim, I know, I know!
I, too, have stumbled so.

Do you send out rebellious cry and question,
As mocking hours pass silently and slow,
Does your insistent "wherefore" bring no answer,
While stars wax pale with watching, and droop low?
I, too, have questioned so,
But now *I know, I know!*
To toil, to strive, to err, to cry, to grow,
To love through all—this is the way to *know.*

INTERMEDIARY

When from the prison of its body free,
My soul shall soar, before it goes to Thee,
Thou great Creator, give it power to know
The language of all sad, dumb things below.
And let me dwell a season still on earth
Before I rise to some diviner birth:
Invisible to men, yet seen and heard,
And understood by sorrowing beast and bird—
Invisible to men, yet always near,
To whisper counsel in the human ear:
And with a spell to stay the hunter's hand
And stir his heart to know and understand;
To plant within the dull or thoughtless mind
The great religious impulse to be kind.

Before I prune my spirit wings and rise
To seek my loved ones in their paradise,
Yea! even before I hasten on to see
That lost child's face, so like a dream to me,
I would be given this intermediate role,
And carry comfort to each poor, dumb soul:
And bridge man's gulf of cruelty and sin
By understanding of his lower kin.
'Twixt weary driver and the straining steed
On wings of mercy would my spirit speed.
And each should know, before his journey's end,
That in the other dwelt a loving friend.

From zoo and jungle, and from cage and stall,
I would translate each inarticulate call,
Each pleading look, each frenzied act and cry,
And tell the story to each passer-by;
And of a spirit's privilege possessed,
Pursue indifference to its couch of rest,
And whisper in its ear until in awe
It woke and knew God's all-embracing law
Of Universal Life—the One in All.

* * * * * *

Lord, let this mission to my lot befall.

LIFE'S CAR

"Hurry up!"
No lingering by old doors of doubt—
No loitering by the way,
No waiting a To-morrow car,
When you can board Today.
Success is somewhere down the track;
Before the chance is gone
Accelerate your laggard pace,
Swing on, I say, swing on—
Hurry up!

"Step lively!"
Belated souls are following fast,
They shout and signal, "Wait."
Conductor Time brooks no delay,
He rings the bell of Fate.
But you can give the man behind,
With one hand on the bar,

A final chance to brook defeat,
And board the moving car.
Step lively!

"Move up!"
Make way for others as you sit
Or stand. This crowded earth
Has room for every journeying soul
En route to higher birth.
Aye, room and comfort, if no one
Took double share or space,
Nor let his greed and selfishness
Absorb another's place.
Move up!

"Hold fast!"
The jolting switch of obstacles
With jarring rails is near.
Stand firm of foot, be strong of grip,
Brace well and have no fear.
The Maker of the Car of Life
Foresaw that curve—Despair,
And hung the straps of faith, and hope
So you might grasp them there.
Hold fast!

OPPORTUNITY

Send forth your heart's desire, and work and wait;
The opportunities of life are brought
To our own doors, not by capricious fate,
But by the strong compelling force of thought.

THE AGE OF MOTORED THINGS

The wonderful age of the world I sing—
The age of battery, coil and spring,
Of steam, and storage, and motored thing.

Though faith may slumber and art seem dead,
And all that is spoken has once been said,
And all that is written were best unread;

Though hearts are iron and thoughts are steel,
And all that has value is mercantile,
Yet marvelous truths shall the age reveal.

Aye, greater the marvels this age shall find
Than all the centuries left behind,
When faith was a bigot and art was blind.

Oh, sorry the search of the world for gods,
Through faith that slaughters and art that lauds,
While reason sits on its throne and nods.

But out of the leisure that men will know,
When the cruel things of the sad earth go,
A Faith that is Knowledge shall rise and grow.

In the throb and whir of each new machine
Thinner is growing the veil between
The visible earth and the world's unseen.

The True Religion shall leisure bring;
And Art shall awaken and Love shall sing:
Oh, ho! for the age of the motored thing!

NEW YEAR

Mortal:

"The night is cold, the hour is late, the world is bleak and drear;
"Who is it knocking at my door?"

The New Year:

"I am Good Cheer."

Mortal:

"Your voice is strange; I know you not; in shadows dark I grope.
"What seek you here?"

The New Year:

"Friend, let me in; my name is Hope."

Mortal:

"And mine is Failure; you but mock the life you seek to bless.
"Pass on."

The New Year:

"Nay, open wide the door; I am Success."

Mortal:

"But I am ill and spent with pain; too late has come your wealth.
"I cannot use it."

The New Year:

"Listen, friend; I am Good Health."

Mortal:

"Now, wide I fling my door. Come in, and your fair statements prove."

The New Year:

"But you must open, too, your heart, for I am Love."

DISARMAMENT

We have outgrown the helmet and cuirass,
The spear, the arrow, and the javelin.
These crude inventions of a cruder age,
When men killed men to show their love of God,
And he who slaughtered most was greatest king.
We have outgrown the need of war!
Should men
Unite in this one thought, all war would end.

Disarm the world; and let all Nations meet
Like Men, not monsters, when disputes arise.
When crossed opinions tangle into snarls,
Let Courts untie them, and not armies cut.
When State discussions breed dissentions, let
Union and Arbitration supersede
The hell-created implements of War.
Disarm the world! and bid destructive thought
Slip like a serpent from the mortal mind
Down through the marshes of oblivion. Soon
A race of gods shall rise! Disarm! Disarm!

EXISTENCE

You are here, and you are wanted,
  Though a waif upon life's stair;
Though the sunlit hours are haunted
  With the shadowy shapes of care.
Still the Great One, the All-Seeing,
Called your spirit into being—
Gave you strength for any fate.
Since your life by Him was needed,
All your ways by Him are heeded—
  You can trust and you can wait.

You can wait to know the meaning
  Of the troubles sent your soul;
Of the chasms intervening
  'Twixt your purpose and your goal;
Of the sorrows and the trials,
Of the silence and denials,
  Ofttimes answering to your pleas;
Of the stinted sweets of pleasure,
And of pain's too generous measure—
  You can wait the *why* of these.

Forth from planet unto planet,
  You have gone, and you will go.
Space is vast, but we must span it;
  For life's purpose is *to know.*
Earth retains you but a minute,
Make the best of what lies in it;

Light the pathway where you are.
There is nothing worth the doing
That will leave regret or rueing,
As you speed from star to star.

You are part of the Beginning,
You are parcel of To-day.
When He set His world to spinning
You were flung upon your way.
When the system falls to pieces,
When this pulsing epoch ceases,
When the *is* becomes the *was,*
You will live, for you will enter
In the great Creative Center,
In the All-Enduring Cause.

THE HEIGHTS

I cried, "Dear Angel, lead me to the heights,
And spur me to the top."
The Angel answered, "Stop
And set thy house in order; make it fair
For absent ones who may be speeding there.
Then will we talk of heights."

I put my house in order. "Now lead on!"
The Angel said, "Not yet;
Thy garden is beset
By thorns and tares; go weed it, so all those
Who come to gaze may find the unvexed rose;
Then will we journey on."

I weeded well my garden. "All is done."
The Angel shook his head.
"A beggar stands," he said,
"Outside thy gates; till thou hast given heed
And soothed his sorrow, and supplied his need,
Say not that all is done."

The beggar left me singing. "Now at last—
At last the path is clear."
"Nay, there is one draws near
Who seeks, like thee, the difficult highway.
He lacks thy courage; cheer him through the day.
Then will we cry, 'At last!'"

I helped my weaker brother. "Now the heights;
Oh, Guide me, Angel, guide!"
The Presence at my side,
With radiant face, said, "Look, where are we now?"
And lo! we stood upon the mountain's brow—
The heights, the shining heights!

THE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

I have listened to the sighing of the burdened and the bound,
I have heard it change to crying, with a menace in the sound;
I have seen the money getters pass unheeding on the way,
As they went to forge new fetters for the people day by day.

Then the voice of Labor thundered forth its purpose and its need,
And I marveled, and I wondered, at the cold dull ear of greed;
For as chimes, in some great steeple, tell the passing of the hour,
So the voices of the people tell the death of purchased power.

All the gathered dust of ages, God is brushing from His book;
He is opening up its pages, and He bids His children look;
And in shock and conflagration, and in pestilence and strife,
He is speaking to the nations, of the brevity of life.

Mother Earth herself is shaken by our sorrows and our crimes;
And she bids her sons awaken to the portent of the times;

With her travail pains upon her, she is hurling from their place
All the minions of dishonor, to admit the Coming Race.

By the voice of Justice bidden, she has torn the mask from might.
All the shameful secrets hidden, she is dragging into light;
And whoever wrongs his neighbor must be brought to judgment *now,*
Though he wear the badge of Labor, or a crown upon his brow.

There is growth in Revolution, if the word is understood;
It is one with Evolution, up from self, to brotherhood;
He who utters it unheeding, bent on self, or selfish gain,
His own day of doom is speeding, though he toil, or though he reign.

God is calling to the masses, to the peasant, and the peer;
He is calling to all classes, that the crucial hour is near;
For each rotting throne must tremble, and fall broken in the dust,
With the leaders who dissemble, and betray a people's trust.

Still the voice of God is calling; and above the wreck I see,
And beyond the gloom appalling, the great Government-to-Be.

From the ruins it has risen, and my soul is overjoyed,
For the School supplants the prison, and there are no
"unemployed."

And there are no children's faces at the spindle or the
loom;
They are out in sunny places, where the other sweet
things bloom;
God has purified the alleys, He has set the white slaves
free,
And they own the hills and valleys in this Government-
to-Be.

THE RADIANT CHRIST

I

Arise, oh master artist of the age,
And paint the picture which at once shall be
Immortal art and bless'd prophecy.
The bruis'd vision of the world assuage;
To earth's dark book add one illumined page,
So scintillant with truth, that all who see
Shall break from superstition and stand free.
Now let this wondrous work thy hand engage.
The mortal sorrow of the Nazarene,
Too long has been faith's symbol and its sign;
Too long a dying Saviour has sufficed.
Give us the glowing emblem which shall mean,
Mankind awakened to the Self Divine;
The living emblem of the Radiant Christ.

II

Too long the crucifix on Calvary's height
Has cast its shadow on the human heart.
Let now Religion's great co-worker Art,
Limn on the background of departing night,
The shining Face all palpitant with light,
And God's true message to the world impart.
Go tell each toiler in the home and mart,
"Lo, Christ is with ye, if ye seek aright."
The world forgets the vital word Christ taught;
The only word the world has need to know;
The answer to creation's problem—Love.
The world remembers what the Christ forgot;
His cross of anguish and his death of woe;
Release the martyr, and the cross remove!

III

For now "the former things have passed away,"
And man, forgetting that which lies behind,
And ever pressing forward, seeks to find
The prize of his high calling. Send a ray
From art's bright sun, to fortify the day,
And blaze the trail to every mortal mind.
The new religion lies in being kind;
Faith stands and works, where once it knelt to pray;
Faith counts its gain, where once it reckoned loss;
Ascending paths, its patient feet have trod;
Man looks within, and finds salvation there.
Release the suffering Saviour from the Cross,
And give the waiting world its Radiant God.

THE CALL

All wantonly in hours of joy,
I made a song of pain.
Soon Grief drew near, and paused to hear,
And sang the sad refrain,
Again and yet again.

Then recklessly in my despair,
I sang of hope one day.
And Joy turned back upon life's track,
And smiled, and came my way,
And sat her down to stay.

A LITTLE SONG

Oh, a great world, a fair world, a true world I find it;
A sun that never forgets to rise,
On the darkest night, a star in the skies,
And a God of love behind it.

Oh, a good life, a sweet life, a large life I take it,
Is what He offers to you, and me;
A chance to do, and a chance to be,
Whatever we choose to make it.

Oh, a far way, a high way, a sure way He leads us;
And if the journey at times seems long,
We must trudge ahead, with a trustful song,
And know at the end He needs us.

THE BIRTH OF JEALOUSY

With brooding mein and sultry eyes,
Outside the gates of Paradise,
Eve sat, and fed the faggot flame,
That lit the path whence Adam came.
(Strange are the workings of a woman's mind.)

His giant shade preceded him,
Along the pathway green, and dim;
She heard his swift approaching tread,
But still she sat with drooping head.
(Dark are the jungles of unhappy thought.)

He kissed her mouth, and gazed within
Her troubled eyes; for since their sin,
His love had grown a thousand fold.
But Eve drew back; her face was cold.
(Oh, who can read the cipher of a soul.)

"Now art thou mourning still, sweet wife?"
Spake Adam tenderly, "the life
Of our lost Eden? Why, in *thee*
All Paradise remains for me."
(Deep, deep the currents in a strong man's heart.)

Thus Eve: "Nay not lost Eden's bliss
I mourn; for heavier woe than this
Wears on me with one thought accursed.
In Adam's life I am not first.
(Oh woman's mind, what hells are fashioned there.)

"The serpent whispered Lilith's name:
('Twas thus he drove me to my shame)
Pluck yonder fruit, he said, and know,
How Adam loved *her,* long ago.
(Fools, Fools, who wander searching after pain.)

"I ate; and like an ancient scroll,
I saw that other life unroll;
I saw thee, Adam, far from here
With Lilith on a wondrous sphere.
(Bold, bold, the daring of a jealous heart.)

"Nay, tell me not I dreamed it all;
Last night in sleep thou didst let fall
Her name in tenderness; I bowed
My stricken head, and cried aloud.
(Vast, vast the torment of a self-made woe.)

"And it was then, and not before,
That Eden shut, and barred its door.
Alone in God's great world I seemed,
Whilst thou of thy lost Lilith dreamed.
(Oh, who can measure such wide loneliness.)

"Now every little breeze that sings,
Sighs Lilith, like thy whisperings.
Oh, where can sorrow hide its face,
When Lilith, Lilith, fills all space?"
(And Adam in the darkness spake no word.)

SUMMER'S FAREWELL

All in the time when Earth did most deplore
The cold, ungracious aspect of young May,
Sweet Summer came, and bade him smile once more;
She wove bright garlands, and in winsome play,
She bound him willing captive. Day by day
She found new wiles wherewith his heart to please;
Or bright the sun, or if the skies were gray,
They laughed together, under spreading trees,
By running brooks, or on the sandy shores of seas.

They were but comrades. To that radiant maid,
No serious word he spake; no lovers' plea.
Like careless children, glad and unafraid,
They sported in their opulence of glee.
Her shining tresses floated wild, and free;
In simple lines, her emerald garments hung;
She was both good to hear, and fair to see;
And when she laughed, then Earth laughed too, and flung
His cares behind him, and grew radiant and young.

One golden day, as he reclined beneath
The arching azure of enchanting skies,
Fair Summer came, engirdled with a wreath
Of gorgeous leaves all scintillant with dyes.
Effulgent was she; yet within her eyes,
There hung a quivering mist of tears unshed.
Her crimson mantled bosom shook with sighs;
Above him bent the glory of her head;
And on his mouth she pressed a splendid kiss, and fled.

New Thought Pastels

Copyright, 1906,
BY
ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

NEW THOUGHT PASTELS

PAGE

A Dialogue 141
The Weed 143
Strength 144
Affirm 145
The Chosen 146
The Nameless 148
The Word 149
Assistance 151
Credulity 152
Consciousness 153
The Structure 154
Our Souls 155
The Law 156
Knowledge 157
Give 159
Perfection 161
Fear 162
The Way 163
Understood 164
His Mansion 165
Effect 166
Three Things 167
Obstacles 168
Prayer 169
Climbing 170
"There Is No Death, There Are No Dead" 171
Realization 173

A Dialogue.

Mortal.

HE world is full of selfishness and greed.
Lord, I would lave its sin.

Spirit.

Yea, mortal, earth of thy good help has need.
Go cleanse *thyself* within.

Mortal.

Mine ear is hurt by harsh and evil speech.
I would reform men's ways.

Spirit.

There is but one convincing way to teach.
Speak *thou* but words of praise.

Mortal.

On every hand is wretchedness and grief,
Despondency and fear.
Lord, I would give my fellow men relief.

Spirit.

Be, then, all hope, all cheer.

Mortal.

Lord, I look outward and grow sick at heart,
Such need of change I see.

Spirit.

Mortal, look *in*. Do thy allotted part,
And leave the rest to ME.

The Weed.

WEED is but an unloved flower!
Go dig, and prune, and guide,
and wait,
Until it learns its high estate,
And glorifies some bower.
A weed is but an unloved flower!

All sin is virtue unevolved,
Release the angel from the clod—
Go love thy brother up to God.
Behold each problem solved.
All sin is virtue unevolved.

Strength.

HO is the strong? Not he who puts to test
His sinews with the strong and proves the best;
But he who dwells where weaklings congregate,
And never lets his splendid strength abate.

Who is the good? Not he who walks each day
With moral men along the high, clean way;
But he who jostles gilded sin and shame,
Yet will not sell his honor or his name.

Who is the wise? Not he who from the start
With Wisdom's followers has taken part;
But he who looks in Folly's tempting eyes,
And turns away, perceiving her disguise.

Who is serene? Not he who flees his kind,
Some mountain fastness, or some cave to find;
But he who in the city's noisiest scene,
Keeps calm within—he only is serene.

Affirm.

ODY and mind, and spirit, all combine
To make the Creature, human and divine.

Of this great trinity no part deny.
Affirm, affirm, the Great Eternal I.

Affirm the body, beautiful and whole,
The earth-expression of immortal soul.

Affirm the mind, the messenger of the hour,
To speed between thee and the source of power.

Affirm the spirit, the Eternal I—
Of this great trinity no part deny.

The Chosen.

THEY stood before the Angel at the gate;
The Angel asked: "Why should you enter in?"
One said: "On earth my place was high and great;"
And one: "I warned my fellow-men from sin;"
Another: "I was teacher of the faith;
I scorned my life and lived in love with death."

And one stood silent. "Speak!" the Angel said;
"What earthly deed has sent you here today?"
"Alas! I did but follow where they led,"
He answered sadly: "I had lost my way—
So new the country, and so strange my flight;
I only sought for guidance and for light."

"You have no passport?" "None," the answer came.
"I loved the earth, tho' lowly was my lot.
I strove to keep my record free from blame,
And make a heaven about my humble spot.
A narrow life; I see it now, too late;
So, Angel, drive me from the heavenly gate."

The Angel swung the portal wide and free,
And took the sorrowing stranger by the hand.
"Nay, you alone," he said, "shall come with me,
Of all this waiting and insistent band.
Of what God gave, you built your paradise;
Behold your mansion waiting in the skies."

The Nameless.

NNUMBERED gods may unremembered die;
A thousand creeds may perish and pass by;
Yet do I lift mine eyes to ONE on high.

Unnamed be HE from whom creation came;
There is no word whereby to speak His name
But petty men have mouthed it into shame.

I lift mine eyes, and with a river's force
My love's full tide goes sweeping on its course
To that supreme and all embracing Source.

Then back through all those thirsting channels roll
The mighty billows of the Over Soul.
And I am He, the portion and the Whole.

As little streams before the flood tide flee,
As rivers vanish to become the sea,
The I exists no more, for I AM HE.

The Word.

H, a word is a gem, or a stone, or
a song,
Or a flame, or a two-edged
sword;
Or a rose in bloom, or a sweet
perfume,
Or a drop of gall, is a word.

You may choose your word like a connoisseur,
And polish it up with art,
But the word that sways, and stirs, and stays,
Is the word that comes from the heart.

You may work on your word a thousand weeks,
But it will not glow like one
That all unsought, leaps forth white hot,
When the fountains of feeling run.

You may hammer away on the anvil of thought,
And fashion your word with care,
But unless you are stirred to the depths, that word
Shall die on the empty air.

For the word that comes from the brain alone,
Alone to the brain will speed;
But the word that sways, and stirs, and stays,
Oh! that is the word men heed.

Assistance.

EAN on no mortal, Love, and serve;
(For service is love's complement)
But it was never God's intent,
Your spirit from its path should swerve,
To gain another's point of view.
As well might Jupiter, or Mars
Go seeking help from other stars,
Instead of sweeping ON, as you.
Look to the Great Eternal Cause
And not to any man, for light.
Look in; and learn the wrong, and right,
From your own soul's unwritten laws.
And when you question, or demur,
Let Love be your Interpreter.

"Credulity."

F fallacies, come knocking at my door,
I'd rather feed, and shelter full a score,
Than hide behind the black portcullis, doubt,
And run the risk of barring one Truth out.

And if pretention for a time deceive,
And prove me one too ready to believe,
Far less my shame, than if by stubborn act,
I brand as lie, some great colossal Fact.

On my soul's door, the latch-string hangs outside;
Within, the lighted candle. Let me guide
Some errant follies, on their wandering way,
Rather, than Wisdom give no welcoming ray.

Consciousness.

OD, what a glory, is this consciousness,
Of life on life, that comes to those who seek!
Nor would I, if I might, to others speak,
The fullness of that knowledge. It can bless,
Only the eager souls, that willing, press
Along the mountain passes, to the peak.
Not to the dull, the doubting, or the weak,
Will Truth explain, or Mystery confess.

Not to the curious or impatient soul
That in the start, demands the end be shown,
And at each step, stops waiting for a sign;
But to the tireless toiler toward the goal,
Shall the great miracles of God be known
And life revealed, immortal and divine.

The Structure.

PON the wreckage of thy yesterday
Design the structure of tomorrow. Lay
Strong corner stones of purpose, and prepare
Great blocks of wisdom, cut from past despair.
Shape mighty pillars of resolve, to set
Deep in the tear-wet mortar of regret.
Work on with patience. Though thy toil be slow,
Yet day by day the edifice shall grow.
Believe in God—in thine own self believe.
All that thou hast desired thou shalt achieve.

Our Souls.

UR souls should be vessels receiving
The waters of love for relieving
The sorrows of men.

For here lies the pleasure of living:
In taking God's bounties, and giving
The gifts back again.

The Law.

HEN the great universe was wrought
To might and majesty from naught,
The all creative force was—
Thought.

That force is thine. Though desolate
The way may seem, command thy fate.
Send forth thy thought—
Create—*Create!*

Knowledge.

OULD you believe in Presences
Unseen—
In life beyond this earthly life?
BE STILL:
Be stiller yet; and listen. Set the
screen
Of silence at the portal of your will.
Relax, and let the world go by unheard.
And seal your lips with some all-sacred word.

Breathe "God," in any tongue—it means the
same;
LOVE ABSOLUTE: Think, feel, absorb the
thought;
Shut out all else; until a subtle flame
(A spark from God's creative center caught)
Shall permeate your being, and shall glow,
Increasing in its splendor, till, YOU KNOW.

Not in a moment, or an hour, or day
The knowledge comes; the power is far too great,
To win in any desultory way.
No soul is worthy till it learns to wait.
Day after day be patient, then, oh, soul;
Month after month—till, lo! the goal! the goal!

Give.

IVE, and thou shalt receive. Give thoughts of cheer,
Of courage and success, to friend and stranger.
And from a thousand sources, far and near,
Strength will be sent thee in thy hour of danger.

Give words of comfort, of defense, and hope,
To mortals crushed by sorrow and by error.
And though thy feet through shadowy paths may grope,
Thou shalt not walk in loneliness or terror.

Give of thy gold, though small thy portion be.
Gold rusts and shrivels in the hand that keeps it.
It grows in one that opens wide and free.
Who sows his harvest is the one who reaps it.

Give of thy love, nor wait to know the worth
Of what thou lovest; and ask no returning.
And wheresoe'er thy pathway leads on earth,
There thou shalt find the lamp of love-light burning.

Perfection.

THE leaf that ripens only in the sun
Is dull and shriveled ere its race is run.
The leaf that makes a carnival of death
Must tremble first before the north wind's breath.

The life that neither grief nor burden knows
Is dwarfed in sympathy before its close.
The life that grows majestic with the years
Must taste the bitter tonic found in tears.

Fear.

EAR is the twin of Faith's sworn
foe, Distrust.
If one breaks in your heart the
other must.

Fear is the open enemy of Good.
It means the God in man misunderstood.

Who walks with Fear adown life's road will
meet
His boon companions, Failure and Defeat.

But look the bully boldly in the eyes,
With mien undaunted, and he turns and flies.

The Way.

ETWEEN the finite and the infinite
The missing link of Love has left
a void.
Supply the link, and earth with
Heaven will join
In one continued chain of endless life.

Hell is wherever Love is not, and Heaven
Is Love's location. No dogmatic creed,
No austere faith based on ignoble fear
Can lead thee into realms of joy and peace.
Unless the humblest creatures on the earth
Are bettered by thy loving sympathy
Think not to find a Paradise beyond.

There is no sudden entrance into Heaven.
Slow is the ascent by the path of Love.

Understood.

VALUE more than I despise
My tendency to sin,
Because it helps me sympathize
With all my tempted kin.

He who has nothing in his soul
That links him to the sod,
Knows not that joy of self-control
Which lifts him up to God.

And I am glad my heart can say,
When others trip and fall
(Although I safely passed that way),
"I understand it all."

His Mansion.

HERE was a thought he hid from
all men's eyes,
And by his prudent life and deeds
of worth
He left a goodly record upon
earth
As one both pure and wise.

But when he reached a dark unsightly door
Beyond the grave, there stood his secret thought.
It was the mansion he had built and brought
To dwell in, on that shore.

Effect.

N unkind tale was whispered in
his ear.
He paused to hear.
His thoughts were food that
helped a falsehood thrive,
And keep alive.

Years dawned and died. One day by venom's
tongue
His name was stung.
He cried aloud, nor dreamed the lie was spawn
Of thoughts long gone.

Each mental wave we send out from the mind,
Or base, or kind,
Completes its circuit, then with added force
Seeks its own source.

Three Things.

NOW this, ye restless denizens of earth,
Know this, ye seekers after joy and mirth,
Three things there are, eternal in their worth.

Love, that outreaches to the humblest things;
Work that is glad, in what it does and brings;
And faith that soars upon unwearied wings.

Divine the Powers that on this trio wait.
Supreme their conquest, over Time and Fate.
Love, Work, and Faith—these three alone are great.

Obstacles.

The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the street.—Proverbs 26: 13.

HERE are no lions in the street;
No lions in the way.
Go seek the goal, thou slothful soul,
Awake, awake, I say.

Thou dost but dream of obstacles;
In God's great lexicon,
That word illstarred, no page has marred;
Press on, I say, press on.

Nothing can keep thee from thine own
But thine own slothful mind.
To one who knocks, each door unlocks;
And he who seeks, shall find.

Prayer.

EAN on thyself until thy strength
is tried;
Then ask God's help; it will not
be denied.

Use thine own sight to see the way to go;
When darkness falls ask God the path to show.

Think for thyself and reason out thy plan;
God has his work and thou hast thine, oh, man.

Exert thy will and use it for control;
God gave thee jurisdiction of thy soul.

All thine immortal powers bring into play;
Think, act, strive, reason, then look up and pray.

Climbing.

HO climbs the mountain does not always climb.
The winding road slants downward many a time;
Yet each descent is higher than the last.
Has thy path fallen? That will soon be past.
Beyond the curve the way leads up and on.
Think not thy goal forever lost or gone.
Keep moving forward; if thine aim is right
Thou canst not miss the shining mountain height.
Who would attain to summits still and fair,
Must nerve himself through valleys of despair.

"There Is No Death, There Are No Dead."

(*Suggested by the book of Mr. Ed. C. Randall.*)

HERE is no death, there are no dead."
From zone to zone, from sphere to sphere,
The souls of all who pass from here
By hosts of living thoughts are led;
And dark or bright, those souls must tread
The paths they fashioned year on year.
For hells are built of hate or fear,
And heavens of love our lives have shed.

Across unatlassed worlds of space,
And through God's mighty universe,
With thoughts that bless or thoughts that curse,
Each journeys to his rightful place.
Oh, greater truth no man has said,
"There is no death, there are no dead."

It lifts the mourner from the sod,
And bids him cast away the reed
Of some uncomforting poor creed,
And walk with Knowledge for a rod.
It bids the doubter seek the broad
Vast fields, where living facts will feed
All those whose patience proves their need
Of these immortal truths of God.

It brings before the eyes of faith
Those realms of radiance, tier on tier,
Where our beloved "dead" appear,
More beautiful because of "death."
It speaks to grief: "Be comforted;
There is no death, there are no dead."

Realization.

HERS was a lonely, shadowed lot;
Or so the unperceiving thought,
Who looked no deeper than her face,
Devoid of chiseled lines of grace–
No farther than her humble grate,
And wondered how she bore her fate.

Yet she was neither lone nor sad;
So much of love her spirit had,
She found an ever-flowing spring
Of happiness in everything.

So near to her was Nature's heart
It seemed a very living part
Of her own self; and bud and blade,
And heat and cold, and sun and shade,
And dawn and sunset, Spring and Fall,
Held raptures for her, one and all.

The year's four changing seasons brought
To her own door what thousands sought
In wandering ways and did not find—
Diversion and content of mind.

She loved the tasks that filled each day—
Such menial duties; but her way
Of looking at them lent a grace
To things the world deemed commonplace.

Obscure and without place or name,
She gloried in another's fame.
Poor, plain and humble in her dress,
She thrilled when beauty and success
And wealth passed by, on pleasure bent;
They made earth seem so opulent.
Yet none of quicker sympathy,
When need or sorrow came, than she.
And so she lived, and so she died.

She woke as from a dream. How wide
And wonderful the avenue
That stretched to her astonished view!

And up the green ascending lawn
A palace caught the rays of dawn.
Then suddenly the silence stirred
With one clear keynote of a bird;
A thousand answered, till ere long
The air was quivering bits of song.
She rose and wandered forth in awe,
Amazed and moved by all she saw,
For, like so many souls who go
Away from earth, she did not know
The cord was severed.

Down the street,
With eager arms stretched forth to greet,
Came one she loved and mourned in youth;
Her mother followed; then the truth
Broke on her, golden wave on wave,
Of knowledge infinite. The grave,
The body and the earthly sphere
Were gone! Immortal life was here!
They led her through the Palace halls;

From gleaming mirrors on the walls
She saw herself, with radiant mien,
And robed in splendor like a queen,
While glory round about her shone.
"All this," Love murmured, "is you own."
And when she gazed with wondering eye,
And questioned whence and where and why,
Love answered thus: "All Heaven is made
By thoughts on earth; your walls were laid,
Year after year, of purest gold;
The beauty of your mind behold
In this fair palace; aye, and more
Waits farther on, so vast your store.
I was not worthy when I died
To take my place here at your side;
I toiled through long and weary years
From lower planes to these high spheres;
And through the love you sent from earth
I have attained a second birth.
Oft when my erring soul would tire
I felt the strength of your desire;
I heard you breathe my name in prayer,
And courage conquered weak despair.
Ah! earth needs heaven, but heaven indeed
Of earth has just as great a need."

Across the terrace with a bound
There sped a lambkin and a hound
(Dumb comrades of the old earth land)
And fondled her caressing hand.
"YOU LOVED THEM INTO PARADISE,"
Was answered to her questioning eyes;
"You taught them love; love has no end!
Nor does love's life on form depend.
If there be mortal without love,
He wakes to no new life above.
If love in humbler things exist,
It must through other realms persist
Until all love rays merge in HIM.
Hark! Hear the heavenly Cherubim!"

Then hushed and awed, with joy so vast
It knew no future and no past,
She stood amidst the radiant throng
That came to swell love's welcoming song—
This humble soul from earth's far coast
The center of the heavenly host.

On earth they see her grave and say:
"She lies there till the judgment day;"
Nor dream, so limited their thought,
What miracles by love are wrought.

What is a Christian 83
The Star 86
The Law 100
Sirius 115
Hymn of the Republic 129
Obstacles 168